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POLL RESULTS

Are you in favor of Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's plan to redefine public service and "reduce" government?

Yes 95

No 43

Sunday, January 09, 2011

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Russian Christmas
Pacific Islands Club hosts its annual Russian-style Christmas party.

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January Ritual
Thousands of Filipinos join a raucous religious procession to honor the Black Nazarene.

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Fluoride Overdose
Federal health officials say many Americans are now getting too much fluoride.

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Fitial now in Hong Kong, heads for Taiwan. PAGE 3
SHEFA spent \$396K for professional contracts in 6 years. PAGE 5

Priorities set to boost revenue and cut costs

» Remove \$250M CUC privatization tag
» Extend 55-year land lease'
» Amend smoking law

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER



RELATED NEWS

■ Saipan Chamber of Commerce installs 2011 officers. PAGE 3

Bob Jones is Chamber's 2010 Businessperson of the Year

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Robert "Bob" Jones, founder and president of Triple J Enterprises and Triple J Saipan Inc., has been named the Saipan

Chamber of Commerce's 2010 Businessperson of the Year.

"It's very humbling," Jones said as he accepted his award from 2009 Businessperson of the Year Ben Babauta of

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HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
Triple J Enterprises founder and president Robert "Bob" Jones, left, accepts his Saipan Chamber of Commerce 2010 Businessperson of the Year award from 2009 awardee, DFS Saipan's Ben Babauta, right, at the Chamber's installation dinner at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside in Garapan on Saturday.

AFTER REVIEW OF CUC'S RATE HIKE PETITION:

Consultant eyes even higher power rate

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission now has two options to

consider when deciding on the new power rate after its consultant, Georgetown Consulting, proposed an even higher adjustment for the existing leveled energy adjustment clause.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. had sought on Dec. 30 an emergency rate hike that would increase the current LEAC rate of \$.024446 per kilowatt-

See CONSULTANT on Page 4

The Fitial administration and the 17th Legislature will start working this week on three pieces of legislation that will help grow the stagnant economy, including removing the current \$250 million requirement to privatize the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., amending the smoking law, and giving \$6.2 million to the Marianas Visitors Authority's airline incentive program.

See REVENUE on Page 4

US congresswoman shot, 6 others killed

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—The "shady individual" showed up at a public gathering for Rep. Gabrielle Giffords asking to see the lawmaker. Told he would have to wait his turn, the man left but returned minutes later and gunfire erupted.

The man, firing a semiautomatic weapon, targeted Giffords as she met with constituents outside a supermarket. Arizona's chief federal judge and five others were killed and 13 people were wounded, including the Democrat lawmaker.

See story on Page 14



Giffords

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Local



Northern Marianas College students pose with their Tan Siu Lin Foundation Scholarship checks during an award ceremony held on Jan. 3, 2011. Standing in the back row from the left are NMC Financial Aid officer Daisy Manglona-Propst, NMC Business Department chair Dr. John Griffin, NMC student Katherine Mersai, NMC accountant Marie Coleman, NMC student Jesse Savellano, TSL Foundation manager Ed Arriola Jr., TSL Foundation vice chair Jerry Tan, NMC student Nazario Ajoste, NMC dean of Student Services Leo Pangelinan, and NMC student John Taman. Seated from left are NMC students Bernadette Laviste, Hazel Doctor, Nicolas Sablan, and Angelina Yobech. Not in photo are NMC students and TSL Foundation Scholarship recipients Daniel Brown and Roque Indalecio.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TSL Foundation names 10 NMC scholarship recipients

In its continued efforts to promote higher education among students of the CNMI, the Tan Siu Lin Foundation awarded 10 Northern Marianas College students to receive \$1,000 each in scholarship funds, totaling \$10,000. The recipients of the scholarships were given their awards at the Fiesta Resort and Spa on Jan. 3, 2011.

Of the recipients, five are hospitality management majors, while five others are pursuing other NMC degrees. In addition to hospitality management, the College offers degrees in business, liberal arts, nursing, natural resources management, criminal justice, and education.

The 10 recipients of the scholarship are Nazario Ajoste, Daniel Brown, Hazel Doctor, Roque Indalecio, Bernadette Laviste, Katherine Mersai, Nicolas Sablan, Jesse Savellano, John Taman, and Angelina Yobech.

"We are glad that the Tan Siu Lin Foundation continually recognizes the importance of the Northern Marianas College in the development of the CNMI workforce," said NMC Dean of Student Services Leo Pangelinan. "We will continue to work closely with the Tan Siu Lin Foundation in order to support students as they become key contributors to the CNMI's economic well-being."

"We would like to express our utmost gratitude to the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for once again providing this scholarship," said NMC Interim President Lorraine Cabrera. "The financial support will definitely make a significant impact in helping students pursue their educational goals."

TanHoldings president Jerry Tan said, "My father and my family are very passionate about education. We've been awarding these scholarships for years and we're proud of all the applicants and all the winners. This new generation of students will be the driving force behind our economy in the years to come and we wish them the best as they pursue their educational and career goals."

The Tan Siu Lin Foundation continues its mission to better serve the communities it operates in by continually forging initiatives and trusted partnerships with various individuals, families, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and governmental agencies.

The scholarships are merit-based and take into considerable account the candidate's community involvement, academic background, and letters of recommendation. The written essay also plays an important role in the final selection of scholarship recipients. (PR)

Flood advisory for Saipan, Tinian

» Moderate to heavy rainfall occurs over weekend

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The U.S. National Weather Service in Guam issued a flood advisory for Saipan and Tinian yesterday, with the two islands experiencing moderate to heavy rainfall over the weekend.

The weather bureau issued an "urban and small stream flood advisory" for minor flooding in poor drainage areas on Saipan, to include Garapan, Chalan Kanoa, Koblerville, San Antonio, and Susupe.

The bureau issued the same flood advisory for Tinian.

Moderate to heavy rains began on Saipan and Tinian on Friday afternoon. As of press time, the island continued experiencing rain-

fall, with extensive cloud cover.

As of yesterday, the CNMI Emergency Management Office had not reported of any major flooding.

"Excessive runoff from heavy rainfall will cause elevated levels on small creeks and streams, and ponding of water roads with poor drainage," according to the weather bureau.

At 12:42pm, it said weather radar and satellite imagery show showers and thunderstorms over Saipan and Tinian.

The bureau noted that more showers and thunderstorms were located east of the two islands and are moving west.

"Persistent moderate to heavy rainfall for the next few hours will likely cause minor flooding in poor drainage areas and small streams," said the bureau in an advisory issued yesterday at 12:46pm.

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Saipan Chamber of Commerce installs 2011 officers

» **Prevailing wage, other priorities this year set**

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Douglas A. Brennan of Microl Corp. officially began his second term as president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce at the 2011 board of directors' installation dinner on Saturday.

Brennan, in his remarks, said the Chamber's priorities for this year include obtaining technical or financial federal assistance for a prevailing wage study.

A prevailing wage study is needed to be done before any foreign worker can obtain a federal employment-based visa.

He said 2011 will also be a busy year for the Chamber, especially when the U.S. Department of Homeland Security issues the CNMI transitional worker program rule.

Besides Brennan, the other officers installed at a ceremony held at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside included Vincent J. Seman of Carlsmith Ball LLP as vice president, Michael S. Johnson of Deloitte Saipan as treasurer, and Joseph "Jojo" T. Camacho of Marianas Pacific Distributors as secretary.

The 2011 board directors include Mark E. Birmingham of MCV, Ayako Matsumoto of Pacific Eagle Enterprises and Flame Tree TV/Visitors Channel, Alex A. Sablan of Saipan Shipping, David M. Sablan Sr. of Century Insurance Co., and Jolene Torres of Marianas International Travel Agency.

Printing office in As Lito burglarized

A printing press in As Lito was burglarized on Dec. 26, 2010, and a computer and printing plates valued at over \$1,600 were stolen, according to the NMI Crime Stoppers Program over the weekend.

Crime Stoppers Program coordinator Jason Tarkong said they are seeking the community's assistance for information about the burglary that occurred at the Elite Printing Office.

Tarkong said that printing press employees discovered the burglary on Dec. 26.

Tarkong said stolen were a Hewlett Packard desktop computer worth \$600 and some printing plates valued at

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman administered the oath of office for the 2011 officers and board of directors.

Before and after the oath-taking, Wiseman gave the audience a brief history of oath taking and the raising of the right hand during such ceremony.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce remains the largest business organization in the CNMI with some 150 members. It promotes and protects business interests, among other things.

During Saturday's \$50-a-plate installation dinner, Brennan's remarks focused on their accomplishments in 2010 and the work ahead, mainly related to the federalization of CNMI immigration.

Rev. Fr. Ryan Jimenez led the invocation and benediction, while Marvin I. Deleon Guerrero provided live music.

The Chamber also held a silent auction that will benefit the organization's Educational Scholarship Fund.

Keynote speaker

The Chamber's keynote speaker, Angel Ray T. Guerrero spoke about "thinking outside the box" in dealing with challenges.

Guerrero, who is also the *Saipan Tribune's* 2010 Person of the Year, was diagnosed with brain tumor at the age of 11. That was when he started thinking of ways to help other patients and later on, other members of the community.

He has since worked with now Hawaii Sen. Glenn Wakai, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan and others in tapping

over \$1,000.

He said it is believed that the suspect(s) committed the crimes the night before, or during the early morning hours.

"Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmicrimestoppers.com. Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest," Tarkong added. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman, fourth from right, joins the 2011 officers of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce led by president Douglas Brennan at the installation dinner Saturday night at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside.

sources of books, other education items, wheelchairs, clothes, toys and hospital linens, among other items, to provide these needs to CNMI residents.

"If I, a 16-year-old high school student, can accomplish

what I have already, imagine what you—leaders of the most respected businesses in our islands—can do if you put your minds and hearts to it," he said.

He urged Chamber members and guests to "think about your

business and personal contacts in the other islands, in the mainland, or in Asia."

"Think about what they may have that we need. In fact, think about what you may have that we need. Think about how you

might help our struggling economy," he added.

Guerrero was accompanied by his parents Joseph and Vicky and his brother, along with other family members, at the Chamber ceremony on Saturday.

Fitial now in Hong Kong, heads for Taiwan

» **After hosting New Year's party for Cabinet, staff members**

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial left yesterday morning for Hong Kong where he will stay for a few days before heading out to Taiwan to promote the CNMI for educational tourism, acting governor Eloy S. Inos said.

Inos said that since many Taiwanese students travel to the United States for their education, the CNMI—as a U.S. territory just a few hours from Taiwan—can also tap into this viable market.

"Taiwanese students are going into the United States and elsewhere...so we thought that since this is a special interest from the people of Taiwan, then we thought the governor, maybe we could invite those folks to come over here," Inos told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview after the Saipan

Chamber of Commerce installation dinner on Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside.

Inos said that Taiwanese students could come here on a student visa under U.S. laws, the same ones that apply to foreign students coming to the United States to study.

Press secretary Angel Demapan separately confirmed yesterday afternoon that Fitial left Sunday morning for Hong Kong and then to Taiwan on official business.

He said Fitial was accompanied by first lady Josie Fitial.

Inos said the governor's visit to Taiwan is at the invitation of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Guam.

The governor's off-island trip to promote the CNMI as a place to get U.S. education is meant to help grow the local economy, especially when the

remaining tourism industry is still weak.

"The governor's headed for Hong Kong and then from there he's going to Taiwan where he's going to talk to some folks there about the education industry here," he said, adding that the governor met the Taiwan representative during his recent visit to Guam.

The CNMI does not have a special relationship with Taiwan, but the CNMI taps foreign investors from Japan, South Korea and other Asian countries.

Post-New Year's party

Fitial's trip comes two days after hosting a post-New Year's party for his staff and Cabinet members Friday night at his private residence in Gualo Rai.

In an interview hours before the party, Fitial said the party is a private one and he was not about to announce anything other than show his gratefulness to his staff and Cabinet.

Inos, who was also at the party, said the party was paid for by out-of-pocket contributions from those who attended the party and not paid for by public funds.



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Kilili, Bordallo react to Giffords shooting

WASHINGTON, D.C.—CNMI Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan released the following statement after learning of the shooting of U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ) and others in Tucson, Arizona yesterday.

“I would like to ask that we all take a moment to pray for the recovery of

Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and the others wounded today in Tucson, and for the souls of those killed in this senseless act of violence.

“Ours is a nation of law; and those who resort to bloodshed to force their views on society strike at the very heart of America.

“Andrea and I offer our deepest condolences to all the victims of this tragic event.”

Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo also issued the following statement about the incident:

“The events in Tucson Arizona today are tragic and have no place in our society. This incident should cause us to reflect on how the level of

political discourse has been degraded on many occasions. We have witnessed across our country where the expression of views has come very close to inciting violence against those who would disagree with other people’s positions.

“My thoughts and prayers go out to Congresswoman Giffords and the others who have been in-

jured or killed in this tragic event. Specifically, my thoughts go out to Gabby’s family, staff members and friends as she recovers from her injuries.

“Gabby is one of the most hard working and accessible Members of Congress. She is a leader in our caucus, and we hope for a speedy recovery.” (PR)

REVENUE

From Page 1

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos said these three bills are either being readied or reviewed, in time for further discussion at the next meeting, tentatively set for Friday.

“These are very significant bills, and we also set milestones,” Inos told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview at the Saipan Chamber of Commerce installation dinner at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside on Saturday.

Inos and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, who left Sunday morning for Hong Kong and Taiwan on official business, held a five-hour close-door meeting with 24 of 29 lawmakers at the Saipan World Resort on Friday.

The administration will be submitting the proposed bill on the \$6.2 million MVA incentive program to the Legislature either today or tomorrow. Inos said most of the funding may have to come from the hotel occupancy tax.

Under the tourism campaign, MVA will provide a \$100 incentive to travel agents for every passenger they will be bring to Saipan from the Japanese cities of Osaka and Nagoya during so-called low peak periods.

The two other bills—CUC privatiza-

tion and amending the smoking law to allow smoking on hotel balconies—are currently pending at the Legislature.

House minority leader Rep. Diego T. Benavente (R-Saipan) said these bills are expected to be acted on in the next few sessions of the House and Senate.

“There’s no question they are priority bills... One of the major accomplishments of the full leadership meeting is to get everybody together and agree on bills and steps to be addressed immediately and those that will be addressed later,” Benavente said yesterday.

Land lease extension

Inos, who also oversees government finances, said the Executive Branch and the Legislature also agreed to closely review Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution, particularly to extend the maximum land lease beyond 55 years.

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), who insisted on imposing deadlines for every plan agreed upon at the leadership meeting, said they agreed to come up with concrete plans on the land lease issue by end of March 2011.

Just like Inos, Manglona pointed out a pending Senate legislative initiative, introduced by Sen. Luis Crisostimo (D-Saipan) seeking to extend private land lease from the exist-

ing 55 years to 99 years.

But Inos said further talks are needed to decide whether to push for up to 99 years, or limit it to 70 or 75 years.

Over the years, proposals to extend permissible terms for private land leases in the CNMI have been unsuccessful.

Foreign nationals can own land fee simple in Guam, Hawaii, and the U.S. mainland. Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia offer 99-year leases for both public and private lands.

The land alienation provision of the CNMI Constitution restricts land ownership to people of Northern Marianas descent.

Manglona and Inos said part of further talks will be to facilitate public participation in deciding whether to amend or retain the land restriction provision.

Cutting costs

Inos and Benavente said proposals to reduce government costs—including shrinking government size by merging duplicative functions and agencies other than letting go of employees—will be further discussed.

The Fitial administration hired Virginia-based Management Analysis Inc. last year to conduct a desk audit on the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs and the Department of Public Safety.

CONSULTANT

From Page 1

hour to \$0.26688—or a 9.1 percent hike. CUC said the increase is necessary to make up for the \$2 million loss it incurred due to high fuel prices. The power adjustment was proposed to take effect on Jan. 1, 2011.

After a review of the CUC proposal, the commission’s consultant, Georgetown, recommended a higher increase of 15 percent—from \$0.24446 to \$0.28125 per kWh—based on a three-month amortization.

“We recommend the LEAC rate changes be implemented based upon a three-month amortization. This approach is consistent with matching fuel costs to recovery rates during the period the expenses are incurred and consistent with the representations made to CUC during the September 2010 LEAC proceeding,” said Georgetown in its report filed with the commission on Thursday.

Georgetown recommends that the LEAC rate be changed as soon as CUC can practically implement the appropriate billing to customers.

For a residential ratepayers using 500 kWh per month, this will result in an overall increase in a typical electric bill of about 14.6 percent, or \$18.40 per month.

Georgetown’s \$0.28125 rate adjustment is broken down into: fuel and lube oil, \$0.23033; projected fuel and lube oil under-recovery, \$0.02997; current LEAC true-up, \$0.00423; under recovery-emergency petition (October-December 2010), \$0.00683; volatility element, \$0.00646; and regulatory and techni-

CUC explains need to hike power rates

On Dec. 30, 2010, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. filed a request with the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission to adjust its base electric rates, or LEAC. This is an interim request, after the CUC’s fuel oil recovery number was set in October 2010. Prices of oil have gone up significantly since the commission’s last LEAC order.

The public is welcome to attend the business meeting, set for Jan. 11, 2011, at 10am at the Chamber of Commerce. CUC has asked to expedite this request without following the timelines typically required of public notices because it is facing an immediate crisis in paying for fuel to generate power.

Chief financial officer Chuck Warren said that “because of the worldwide recession, the price of oil stabilized for a while. As long as oil prices remained stable, the size of the large weekly cash payments CUC must make to Mobil Oil were predictable. But oil prices have been increasing quickly over the last few months, so that our LEAC recoveries are not sufficient to cover our oil bills.”

When asked about why the LEAC was not set high enough at the hearing held in September 2010, Warren said that “it was determined that the

fuel price volatility factor could be reduced to 2.8 percent. That change, coupled with the removal of the OPA funding provision in the LEAC, allowed the rate to remain at the current level. This was a calculated risk, based on a number of considerations. In particular the commission and CUC management were very concerned that our customers were already hard-hit, given CNMI’s deteriorating economy. We all wanted to avoid an increase as long as we could.”

CUC’s supplier, Mobil Oil, has advised CUC that prices will continue to rise. CUC expects Mobil’s prediction to be accurate because its past predictions have been highly accurate and Mobil uses reliable economic forecasting tools for its projections.

CUC has no other source of oil than the contract with Mobil, which has been reviewed by the commission, and must pay monthly in cash. CUC’s budget assumes that the LEAC rates fully cover the cost of oil. There is no other source of funding to continue CUC’s operations. As oil bills increase, CUC will have to stop paying for its only source of fuel, with resultant blackouts. In addition, CUC will be put in immediate danger of violating the U.S. District Court’s stipulated orders. (PR)

supports a finding that the petition for interim LEAC rate relief meets the commission requirement that the under recovery of fuel oil cost will exceed \$350,000.

CPUC is set to meet on Tuesday to decide on these proposals.

BOB JONES

From Page 1

DFS Saipan Ltd. at the Chamber’s installation dinner at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside Saturday.

Jones, who has been in business for over 40 years, bested three other nominees for the coveted award.

They were Delta Management Corp. Saipan president Jim Arenovski, Pacific Islands Club general manager Kieran Daly, and Triple J Saipan marketing manager John “Jay” Santos.

Jones founded Triple J Enterprises and Triple J Saipan Inc., the parent company of Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods, Triple J Motors, Triple J Super Fresh Market, Hertz Rent-a-Car, Tony Roma’s, Capricciosa, and Truong’s Restaurants.

The three “J’s” in Triple J Enterprises are Jones’s three children: Julie, Jeff and Jay.

While all other investors have held off on their investments or closed shop, Triple J has done the exact opposite—opened more businesses and hired more people.

One example is Triple J’s teaming up with other minority partners to build in 2010 a 60-unit, \$28 million low-cost residential housing complex in Chalan Kanoa.

In 2010, Triple J also bought the former Pacific Gardenia Hotel in Chalan Kanoa and has long-term plans to develop the property.

In his acceptance speech on Saturday night, Jones said the CNMI will be able to get out of its economic mess “not by cutting further but by growing,” which includes hiring more individuals. He said what people need now are jobs.

Jones said besides Triple J, there are other businesses that have seen opportunities even during the tough economic times in the CNMI, including the Delgado family who owns IT&E and Shell, and Asiana Airlines.

‘Think outside the box’

Jones said he was inspired by Saipan Chamber of Commerce’s keynote speaker Angel Ray T. Guerrero, who was also named the *Saipan Tribune* 2010 Person of the Year.

Guerrero, who was diagnosed with brain tumor at 11, has been going out of his way to help others—whether it be educational books, wheelchairs for patients, toys, hospital bed linens and other educational items—by tapping other people who have access to a lot of the supplies that the CNMI needs.

He’s now 16.

“I encourage all of us to take Angel’s word,” Jones said, referring to Guerrero’s statement that people should “think outside the box” to deal with challenges.

In 1981, Jones was the first recipient of the Guam Business News’ Businessman of the Year award. Two years later, in 1983, he was named the first ever Guam Executive of the Year. In 2000, he was named one of the most influential people in tourism, having served as director, vice chairman and chairman of the board of the Guam Visitors Bureau. Jones was also inducted into the Guam Business Hall of Fame in 2001.

“Collectively, it will be really tough for us to come up with someone more deserving. He is one of a handful who has, and continues to, accomplish a lot and is very humble,” Babauta said when introducing Jones at the dinner.

Jones is also the chairman of the CNMI Governor’s Strategic Economic Development Council.

His Triple J businesses and their employees have supported and served the Saipan Chamber of Commerce in many capacities, including as directors, vice president and president, and regularly participate in and support Chamber events.

75 and still kicking

Jones, accompanied by his wife Margaret and their son Jay at the Chamber installation dinner on Saturday, said it is gratifying that he’s still winning awards at 75 years old.

Their son, Jay B. Jones of Triple J Motors, was also the Chamber’s 2001 Businessperson of the Year.

“Most of my friends are no longer around. I am grateful to the Lord that I can still continue to work, that I am still in good health,” he told reporters later.

To mark his 75th birthday on Dec. 31, Jones, along with his family, went skiing in Japan’s skiing mecca of Hakuba.

He said daily walking and other forms of exercise keep him stay fit and healthy.

Jones and his wife have lived on Saipan for well over 15 years.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce started bestowing the annual Businessperson of the Year award in 1996. Nominees must be residents of the CNMI and members of the Chamber.

A panel of past recipients evaluates nominees on the basis of criteria such as community involvement, contributions to the community, support for local workforce, and participation in the Chamber.

SHEFA spent \$396K for professional contracts in 6 years

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Saipan Higher Educational Financial Assistance spent over \$396,000 for professional services since the program's inception in 2004.

Records obtained by SHEFA from the Department of Finance indicated that this expenditure was incurred from 2004 up to 2010.

These professional services were mainly consulting fees paid to consultants William Torres and Sue Dris. Each was approved for a \$40,000 contract each year for six years.

SHEFA administrator Henry Hofschneider disclosed Friday that other items under professional services included legal opinions sought by the management.

Hofschneider said all these funds were sourced from the yearly SHEFA operations budget of \$100,000.

"Now that we have a very

limited budget for our operation, it is our intention not to enter into any professional service contract or even tapping legal opinion. In cases we need such, we intend to seek the Office of the Attorney General for assistance," said Hofschneider.

He said he has yet to get the records of each year's detailed professional expenditures for SHEFA.

"Without seeing that particular listing under professional services, I assume that this was being paid to the two consultants," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

SHEFA gets \$100,000 every year for operations. Hofschneider said that this is not "sure thing" this fiscal year due to the low collection from poker fees.

The number of poker machines in the Commonwealth has declined dramatically in the last six years, from over 1,400 in 2004 to only 576 active machines at present—a loss of 59 percent.

This fiscal year, the government projects to collect \$6.912 million from these existing machines, mainly from license fees and other costs.

There were some 1,414 poker machines in the CNMI in late

2005, contributing some \$16.4 million to government coffers. SHEFA received \$3 million annually for its programs.

Hofschneider said he wants to use their limited operations budget to hire a full-time ad-

ministrative clerk. Right now, they're using trainees from the Workforce Investment Agency to file records.

Hofschneider, and the previous acting administrator, Jeff Tomokane, were hired using the

Saipan Mayor's Office's personnel costs.

Besides hiring a full-time employee, Hofschneider also intends to add more telephone lines and buy a new computer and printer for the office.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Taga Riders president Bill Camacho, third from right, hands the group's donation to Saipan Seniors Advisory Council officers Friday morning at the Aging Center. From left, council treasurer Christiana Michael; member Meryalen Conrad; president Teresita Sorroza; Camacho; vice president; and secretary Rosario Ibanez.

Taga Riders donates to *man'amko*

Cabrera mum about application for NMC president

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

If interim president Lorraine T. Cabrera was vocal last year about her intention not to apply for the presidency of the Northern Marianas College, this year she is keeping her options close to her chest.

In a statement issued to *Saipan Tribune* Friday, the college said that any decision to apply for the NMC presidency is a "personal one" for Cabrera.

The statement said that the interim president remains focused on gearing up for the new semester, ensuring continued adherence to accreditation standards, and seeing to NMC's fiscal stability.

The statement said that the college will not provide any official statement on whether Cabrera does or does not plan to apply for the presidency.

Cabrera, who was named NMC interim president since January 2010, was not among the 12 candidates who initially applied for the position when it was first opened by the Board of Regents.

Although top candidates were named and recommended to the board by the presidential search committee, the board failed to name one and instead re-announced the vacancy.

A new presidential search panel has also been formed, now chaired by regent Andrew Orsini, who is also the board's personnel committee chairperson.

Cabrera has reportedly already informed some individuals of her intention to apply for the presidency and that she wants to inhibit herself from

any discussion or matters related to the hiring and recruitment for the position.

The Board of Regents, through the Association of Community College Trustees, will accept applications until Jan. 15 in time for the target selection of a new president by end of the month or early February.

The college is offering applicants an \$80,000 per annum salary, excluding benefits. This is the same rate provided former president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, who was terminated on April 12, 2010.

According to the board, once the ACCT has referred the names of the pool of candidates to the search committee, committee members will review the reports of each candidate and conduct interviews. If the applicant is on-island, a personal interview will be conducted; if the applicant is off-island, a telephone conference interview will be done. The support committee will coordinate all logistics for the interviews.

A standard set of questions will be prepared by the board for the candidates' interview.

NMC, whose accreditation fate will be decided this month, has had seven presidents in 10 years.

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It was never too late for holiday gifts as the Taga Riders brought donations for the island's senior citizens at the Aging Center last Jan. 7.

The group, composed of customized motorcycle enthusiasts, donated fruits, bottled water, stuffed animals, and cash for the

man'amko.

Taga Riders president Bill Camacho presented the donation to Saipan Seniors Advisory Council officers Friday morning.

Walter Manglona, Aging Center program coordinator, said each of the congregate received an apple, orange, and bottled water.

According to Manglona, the stuffed animals will be raffled

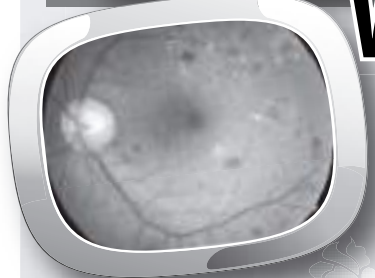
off today to the senior citizens since there is not enough for each senior citizen.

Aging director Rose Mondala told *Saipan Tribune* that the group makes it a point to visit the *man'amko* and donate items to them during holidays.

"We thank them very much for the donation. We're always grateful for every donation they make to the *man'amko*," said Mondala.



Cabrera



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Funded By the Office of Minority Health Resource Center

PIC's Russian Christmas party draws record crowd

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Thirteen days after the celebration of Christmas, the Pacific Islands Club Magellan Restaurant was festooned with holiday décor once again on Friday night for the annual Russian-style Christmas party, which is based on the Orthodox Church calendar.

Over 200 Russian guests enjoyed the Christmas feast and entertainment that included performances from the PIC Clubmates, the in-house Icon Band, and various local youth dance groups.

"It was a record-breaking number for our Russian Christmas party and certainly way above our expectation. We were happy because the Russian guests were not just from PIC but also from other hotels," said web marketing manager Elly Stoilova.

Stoilova said the premier Russian market hotel has been hosting this party every year for about 10 years now.

Stoilova told *Saipan Tribune* that their guests on Friday were not only tourists but also Russian local residents as well.

"We even had an American couple guest who joined in the celebration for a unique cultural experience," she added.

Guests also had a great photo opportunity with Santa Claus and his granddaughter Snegurochka who graced the party last Jan. 7.

Young Russian guests were entertained with magic tricks by Prince the Magician.

Local teen dancers such as the R.B.K. Dance Crew, Project Impact, Elements, Project Impact Level Up, and FDC gave a modern touch to the party.

About 15 dancers joined the

dance battle that was won by 10-year-old Carlo, who took home 10 Laser Tag Park passes, the newest attraction at PIC.

Stoilova said they also held a fundraising raffle draw and gave away a number of prizes.

She said the raffle draw raised over \$300 for the orphans at Children Hospital #3 in Vladivostok, Russia as part of PIC's charity project called "Sharing Seeds."

Since 2009, PIC has been providing help to the orphans by installing new windows and doors and building a partition at the hospital as well as purchasing essentials such as diapers and baby food.

According to Stoilova, this year's money will be used to purchase baby cribs.

Stoilova expressed her appreciation for all Russian guests who chose to celebrate their

Christmas on island at PIC.

"We're very happy about the

guests' feedbacks. We're glad to know that they appreciated the

party we prepared for them," she added.



▲ Young Russian guests patiently wait for Prince the Magician to perform his magic tricks.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



◀ Russian mothers and their children enjoy the art booth with a PIC Clubmate.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

▼ Elly Stoilova, web marketing manager for Pacific Islands Club, poses with Santa Claus and granddaughter Snegurochka, during the Russian-style Christmas party at The Magellan restaurant last Friday.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



INVITATION FOR BIDS WATER TASK FORCE IFB11-GOV-002



Governor Benigno R. Fitial, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed bids for the TP-1 WATER WELL and WATER LINE CONNECTION in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of the Treasury (T-Listed).

The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a US Treasury listed company. The Contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal laws including the Davis Bacon Act.

This project is funded by a grant from the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), Department of the Interior. The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the project approval from OIA.

The project consists, in general, but is not limited to:

- 1,700 linear feet of 4" diameter water main and appurtenances
- Installation of one wellhead plumbing system, with pump/motor, drop pipe, power line, etc.
- Well pump installation
- Construction of one electrical control building with fencing, gates and slab
- Connection to the existing valving at the Capitol Hill Reservoir

Construct all work in strict accordance with the Plans and Specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the Contract.

A non-refundable payment of \$300 to CNMI Treasury is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after **January 10, 2011** at the Water Task Office, 1316 Anatahan Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan. A mandatory pre-bid conference for this project is scheduled at **10:00 a.m., on January 21, 2011**, at the WTF Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit will be made as a part of the pre-bid meeting.

All inquiries shall be in writing and addressed to Pedro Sasamoto, Program Manager, Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or faxed to (670) 664-2279. Inquiries must be received no later than 4:30 PM on January 20, 2011.

Bidding Procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, contained in the CNMI Administrative Code, Title 70 Subchapter 70-30.3. Preference is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funds for this project.

Sealed bids must be marked **"IFB11-GOV-002"** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 3:00 pm local time **February 8, 2011**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 3:00 pm local time **February 8, 2011**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **February 8, 2011**, and must be received no later than **February 17, 2011**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 3:00 pm local time, **February 18, 2011**. However, if no Notices of Intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 3:00 pm local time on **February 9, 2011**.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/S/ Benigno R. Fitial,
Governor and Contracting Officer

/S/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement and Supply

EMO warns of high surf, rip currents

The Emergency Management Office is advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches in the next two days, especially along north and west facing reefs, as rip currents are life threatening.

In a high surf advisory it issued yesterday, EMO said that a north swell will increase

the surf to hazardous levels Monday through early Tuesday morning. The high surf advisory is in effect from 6am Monday to 6am Tuesday.

Based on information received from the National Weather Service, a north swell of 5 feet Sunday night will increase to 6 feet by Monday

morning. Surf heights of 6 to 8 feet last night are expected to increase to 7 to 9 feet this morning. Surf of 9 feet is considered hazardous. The surf is expected to remain hazardous until early Tuesday morning. This surf will also cause a high rip current risk for north facing reefs. **(EMO)**

HPV campaign seeks volunteers

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is looking for volunteers who will provide assistance for the scheduled human papilloma virus vaccination campaign tomorrow that aims to fight cervical cancer.

Program manager Tina Sablan the Department of Public Health Immunization Program, together

with Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition partners, will be offering free HPV vaccinations to junior high and high school female students in the CNMI.

She said consent forms signed by parents must be presented for the students to receive the HPV vaccine.

Sablan said the volunteers will assist with the registration process on Jan. 11 from 9am to 12pm at Chacha Junior High School and

Kagman High School.

She said there will be a brief volunteer orientation at 8:30am in each school.

Sablan said the HPV Vaccination Campaign is part of the celebration of the Cervical Cancer Awareness Month celebration this Jan.

To sign up as a volunteer, contact DPH Comprehensive Cancer Control program coordinator Joanne Ogo at 236-8728, call CCA at 682-0050 or email cca@ccamarianas.org.

Fisherman says ruling about duration of his injury was erroneous

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The fisherman who was awarded \$3,600 in damages for the injuries he suffered when a motorboat drove over him as he was spear fishing at Micro Beach in 2007 has insisted that the duration of his injury was 29 months and not six months, as the federal court had determined.

Pedro Pangelinan Pinaula, through counsel Joseph Horey, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to amend its order to re-

flect the actual duration of time. Horey said that, based on Pinaula’s testimony and the medical records, the actual duration of his client’s injury was 29 months or no less than 14 months, if adjusted for mitigation.

Horey said their motion to amend is necessary in order to conform the court’s findings of fact to the evidence the judge accepted and relied on in reaching them.

Pinaula sued boat operator Banga Bandhu Baidya and Baidya’s employer, Seahorse

Inc. Saipan, for negligence, reckless infliction of emotional distress, and negligent training/supervision. Pinaula’s common-law wife, Linda Cruz Pangelinan, joined in the lawsuit.

Last month, U.S. District Court for the NMI visiting judge William Fremming Nielsen found negligence both on the part of Pinaula and the defendants.

Nielsen, however, determined that Baidya’s negligence proximately caused Pinaula’s injury. The judge found Baidya

and Seahorse Inc. liable to pay Pinaula damages worth \$3,600.

Nielsen said that, based on Pinaula’s account of the duration of injury as well as the medical records, the court estimates that his injury lasted about six months.

In Pinaula’s motion to amend, Horey said his client contended at trial that his injury continues up to the present, albeit less severely since February 2009, when his physical therapy sessions ended.

Horey said the defendants questioned whether there was any

injury at all, but never contended that, if there was an injury, it lasted only six months, or any other particular length of time.

“The six-month duration was thus an innovation of the court, based on its acceptance of the testimony of Mr. Pinaula and of the medical records, but is rejection of the testimony of Ms. Pangelinan,” the lawyer said.

Horey clarified that Pinaula does not seek to reopen or reargue the question of what evidence the court should have given credence to.

“It seeks only to point out that, even within the context of the court’s expressed view of the relative credibility of the evidence, its finding of six months for the duration of injury was erroneous, since the very evidence that the court accepted indicated a longer duration,” he said.

Pinaula was swimming and fishing with a sling in the shallow waters off Micro Beach mid-afternoon of Aug. 25, 2007,

when he saw the boat, being driven by Baidya, coming toward him rapidly.

To avoid being hit, Pinaula quickly submerged but the rope connecting him to his cooler used for collecting fish was caught in the boat’s propeller. The propeller struck and cut the swimming fins Pinaula was wearing.

As a result, the complaint said, Pinaula suffered both physical and emotional injury, including shaking, difficulty walking, persistent pain and numbness in his left arm and hand, interference with sleep, loss of strength, and mobility of his left arm and hand, a chronic fear of boats and of the sea.

Richard W. Pierce, counsel for the defendants, denied that Baidya drove the boat in an unsafe manner. He pointed out that Pinaula did not use a recommended dive flag to mark his presence and he foolishly swam/dove in a boating channel through the reef.

Fee Free Days in 2011 encourages Americans to visit a national park

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced last week that the National Park Service will waive admission fees on 17 selected dates throughout 2011 and encouraged all Americans to make a New Year’s resolution to visit a national park this year.

“Many people have made resolutions to spend more quality time with loved ones and to get outdoors and unplug in 2011,” said Salazar. “There’s no better place than a national park to help keep those resolutions.”

Salazar noted that with 394 national parks throughout the country, most Americans live within a few hours of a park, making them places for easy and affordable vacations any time of the year.

“In these tough economic times, our fee-free days will give families many opportunities to enjoy our nation’s heritage and natural beauty in meaningful and affordable ways,” he said.

The 2011 fee-free dates will be the weekend of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Jan. 15-17), National Park Week (April 16-24), the first day of summer (June 21), National Public Lands Day (Sept. 24), and the weekend of Veterans Day (Nov. 11-13).

The first fee free days are centered on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

“Visitors can literally walk in Dr. King’s footsteps at national parks such as Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in Georgia, Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail in Alabama, or the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis.

“Several parks will also honor Dr. King by hosting volunteer projects for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service on Jan. 17,” added Jarvis.

Many national park concessions will also offer discounts on fee free days, saving visitors money on food, lodging, tours, and souvenirs. More information is available at <http://www.nps.gov/findapark/feefreeparks.htm>.

Co-owner of former remittance center pleads not guilty

Haydn L. Villegas, the co-owner of a former remittance center who was indicted for his role in an alleged conspiracy to defraud a Philippine bank of \$109,855, has pleaded not guilty to conspiracy charges.

Villegas appeared with counsel Joey San Nicolas in federal court on Thursday.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Beverly McCallum represented the U.S. government in the case.

Villegas’ jury trial will be on Feb. 28, 2011, at 9am.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David A. Wiseman ordered the prosecution and the defense to file pre-

trial motions no later than Jan. 20, 2011.

According to the indictment, the scheme to defraud began in November 2004 when Haydn Villegas and Ana Maria V. Villegas, then co-owners of Philippine Express Remittance, started passing checks drawn on insufficient funds at PNB Express.

PNB Express was then a subsidiary of Philippine National Bank. At that time, Armilaine Salamat was the manager of PNB Express.

Although a number of the checks that Hadyn Villegas and Ana Villegas issued were returned as unpaid, Salamat al-

legedly continued accepting checks drawn on the couple’s four Saipan bank accounts.

Salamat pleaded guilty in July 2010 to conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud. She has yet to be sentenced. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



Northern Marianas College
PRESIDENT

Updated Dec. 23, 2010

The Northern Marianas College is currently accepting applications for the position of President. The President of the Northern Marianas College serves as the chief executive officer for the Board of Regents and oversees a multi-campus college system located in three separate islands (Saipan, main campus; Rota and Tinian). The President will report to the Board of Regents and will be expected to carry out the mission of the College:

The mission of Northern Marianas College shall be to provide the best quality and meaningful post secondary and adult educational opportunities for the purpose of improving the quality of life for the individual and for the Commonwealth as a whole. The College shall be responsible for providing education in the areas of adult and continuing education, post secondary and adult vocational education and professional development for the people of the Commonwealth.

Minimum Qualifications:

Master’s degree from a U.S. accredited university plus five (5) years of executive level management experience in an institution of higher education or other relevant organization, or a combination of at least five (5) years of executive level management including post-secondary education teaching experience; experience working in a multicultural environment; experience in accreditation process, personnel management, budget development and presentation, strategic planning, and institutional assessment, fundraising, mediation, and team building; and knowledge of federal programs and grants application in higher education.

Preference will be given to applicants that meet or exceed the following:

1. Doctoral degree holders in education administration or related fields from a US accredited institution (other terminal degree holders will be considered); and
2. Five years or more experience in an executive position in higher education administration or related fields; and
3. Three years or more of teaching experience in postsecondary education; and
4. Knowledge of technology used in higher education; and
5. Considerable experience with Asia-Pacific island cultures.

The salary for the position is \$80,000 per annum plus benefits. Applications will be reviewed immediately. Applicants with non-U.S. degrees are responsible for providing an official evaluation of their degrees to determine U.S. equivalency.

Applicants should include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, and references. **The target date for applications is January 15, 2011** - Please submit application immediately. Complete application packages and documents may be sent electronically to searches@acct.org and a paper copy must also be mailed to:

Dr. Narcisa Polonio, Vice President
Association of Community Colleges Trustees
1233 20th Street, NW, Suite 301
Washington, DC 20036

For additional information, nominations or confidential inquiries contact Dr. Narcisa Polonio, ACCT, Vice President for Education, Research and Board Leadership Services, 202-276-1983 (mobile) or npolonio@acct.org

For more information about this position and about NMC, visit www.nmcnet.edu or www.acct.org

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

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ITB11-DPL-031**

SUBMISSION / OPENING DATE: FEBRUARY 04, 2011 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

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PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ OSCAR M. BABAUTA
SECRETARY OF DPL

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold its Regular meeting **Friday, January 14, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.** at the NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Adoption of Agenda

D. Adoption of Minutes of Meetings

1. August 24, 2010 (Special)

2. September 02, 2010 (Regular)

3. October 26, 2010 (Regular)

4. November 30, 2010 (Regular)

5. December 17, 2010 (Regular)

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS

A. Communications

1. Chairman/Trustees

2. Administrator/Deputy

B. Status / Updates

1. Administrative

2. Action Items (Summary)

C. MHL Program

D. Investments

E. Accounting

1. NMI Retirement Fund

2. GHILTF

3. WCC

F. Board Committees

1. Operations, Personnel and Review

2. Finance & Investment

3. Special

G. Internal Auditor

IV. LEGAL MATTERS

A. Reports

1. Legal / Board Counsel

2. Administrative Hearing Officer

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. New Asset Allocation Transition (update)

B. Pension Software System (update)

C. Fiduciary Audit (update)

D. Fund Collection/WCC Contract Attorney

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY 2011 Revised Budget

B. FY 2012 Budget

C. Fund Annual Meeting (Feb. 2011)

D. Adoption as Permanent - Regulation Amendment for Health Insurance Rate Increase

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Announcements

B. Next Meeting

C. Adjournment

/s/ SIXTO K. IGISOMAR
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Leon Guerrero is US Marshal for Guam, NMI



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Frank Leon Guerrero is joined, from left to right, by Director Stacia Hylton of the U.S. Marshals Service; his son, Kevin Leon Guerrero; Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo; his wife, Esther Leon Guerrero; and CNMI Delegate Killi Sablan.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Frank Leon Guerrero took his oath of office Friday for the position of U.S. Marshal for Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. The ceremony was held at the U.S. Marshals Service Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo hosted a reception in honor of Leon Guerrero at her office in the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill.

As U.S. Marshal for Guam and the Northern Marianas, Leon Guerrero will be responsible for the apprehension of federal fugitives, protection of the

federal judiciary, operation of the Witness Security Program, transportation of federal prisoners, and seizure of criminal property within his jurisdiction.

"I congratulate Frank on being sworn-in as the U.S. Marshal for Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands," said Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo. "I have known Frank for many years, and I am confident that he will be an effective U.S. Marshal. I commend him for his years of service to the people of Guam, and I look forward to his leadership of the Marshals Service and his con-

tributions to law enforcement in our communities."

Leon Guerrero has served as the Chief Marshal for the Judiciary of Guam, a position he held since 2006. He served as the Constituent Services Director for Bordallo from 2004 to 2006.

Leon Guerrero retired as a Police Major from the Guam Police Department in 2000 after 25 years of service as a police officer and later as a senior police manager. He served in a variety of positions, including as officer-in-charge of the Guam Police Training Section, as Special Assistant to the Chief of

Police, Commander for Agana Precinct, and he was designated as the "Incident Commander" for Guam Police in the event of a major crisis situation.

Leon Guerrero attended the University of Guam and received an associate degree from Guam Community College in 1983.

The U.S. Marshals Service is the nation's oldest federal law enforcement organization. It was established by Congress in 1789 with 13 Marshals for each of the 13 original judicial districts. Today each of the 94 judicial districts in the U.S. has a Marshal. **(PR)**

Injured Guam hiker rescued on Mount Tenjo

MOUNT TENJO, GUAM—A cross country hiker with head and neck injuries was hoisted to safety by Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 Saturday evening.

Shortly after 5pm Saturday, Guam Fire Rescue received a report of a hiker near Mount Tenjo with head and neck injuries received when a boulder fell and hit him on the head while running. GFR requested, via U. S. Coast Guard Sector Guam, help from HSC-25 to hoist and transport the injured hiker. In a coordinated effort, GFR, Coast

Guard Sector Guam, and HSC-25 were able to locate the victim quickly for transport to the U.S. Naval Hospital for treatment.

Rescue pilots were guided to the dark, remote trail by a technique commonly referred to as a "buzz saw," which involves using a chemical glow stick attached to a lanyard being spun overhead in a circle, giving the technique its name from the buzzing noise created. This resulted in a highly visible fluorescent circle, enabling the aircrew to quickly locate the scene and hoist the hiker to safety.

GFR units remained on scene after the hoist and assisted 15 other running club participants through darkness and wet terrain to return safely to the trailhead. The running club members had stayed on scene to care for the injured team member while GFR units responded by land.

Hikers should take precaution against dangers they may face

while on trails and ensure they take a reliable means of contacting emergency officials in the event that assistance is needed.

The Coast Guard urges the public to make early contact with emergency officials and report all marine emergencies to the Coast Guard Sector Guam Command Center at 671-564-USCG. **(USCG)**

Guam Shipyard: Pumping continues throughout weekend

APRA HARBOR, Guam—Guam Shipyard on Sunday continued pumping wastewater around the clock from *Big Blue's* machinery room onto the tug *Marianas Voyager*. Approximately 108,000 gallons of oil and oily wastewater had been offloaded to the tug by Sunday. *Big Blue's* diesel tank, the largest known fuel source onboard the drydock at this time, has now been confirmed empty.

Dewatering efforts continue in drydock's starboard side machinery space. This machinery space contains a lube oil tank and sludge oil tank that will need to be emptied before Guam Shipyard can raise "Big Blue" out of the water. These tanks will be emptied once Guam Shipyard is able to pump out enough water to safely reach the tanks and connect transfer lines.

Every precaution has been taken to ensure oily water remains contained to protect the environment.

Coast Guard Sector Guam and the Pacific Strike Team continued to monitor the dewatering and recovery efforts at Guam Shipyard this weekend. A marine surveyor from Hawaii that was requested by Guam Shipyard is also on scene now to assist with future salvaging plans and the safe raising of the drydock once the response shifts from pollution mitigation to salvage.

U. S. Coast Guard Sector Guam continues to urge all commercial and recreational boating traffic to remain vigilant while transiting near *Big Blue*. To report any debris or signs of oil in the water call the Sector Guam Command Center at 671-564-USCG. **(USCG)**

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 10, 2001

Wendy's files for bankruptcy

Two months after closure of its restaurant on Saipan, the local franchisee of the international fastfood chain Wendy's has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy, claiming debts of over a quarter million dollars. Wendy's Saipan, Inc. president Charles Jordan filed the papers yesterday at the U.S. District Court following a decision by its board of stockholders last month. The company opened its lone restaurant on the island in 1996, but ceased operation due to the prolonged economic difficulties confronting the CNMI, which resulted in financial losses for WSI. Among creditors seeking payment are its 24 employees who were not given their wages and salaries for the last pay period before shutting the doors of Wendy's Saipan for good on October 30 last year.

Vanuatu chools to ban smoking, sex

Port Vila (PINA Nius)—Vanuatu's Department of Education has promised to this year enforce a ban on alcohol consumption, smoking and sex by students in schools. The director of school programs, Kalmele Matai, said tackling the issues is a priority high on the agenda of his department. Matai spoke up to reply to a copy of the secondary schools disciplinary report listing 22 secondary schools which reported drinking, smoking and sex by students. The report also implicates one or two teachers in giving alcohol to their students or having sex with them. The report was produced following the November conference by the principals of 22 secondary schools out of a total of 50.

Jan. 10, 2002

Ingram bids DPS farewell, reiterates police mission

Outgoing Department of Public Safety Commissioner Charles W. Ingram Jr. sat at his last staff meeting as police chief yesterday in his Susupe office of four years, reflecting on a mission statement that he created for the department when he filled the top DPS position in 1998. Ingram, whose contract under the DPS expired effective midnight of January 9, 2002, sought to remind all DPS personnel of the mission statement that he said "is as important now as it was then." "The mission of the CNMI DPS is to serve the needs and protect all of the people within our jurisdiction. This is to be done with respect, fairness and sensitivity to the needs of the community," he said, in a memorandum addressed to all DPS employees.

FAA gives Salas, CPA Board high marks

The Federal Aviation Administration commended the Commonwealth Ports Authority for its efforts in ensuring the success of the many projects jointly carried out by the CPA and the FAA. In a letter to Gov.-elect Juan N. Babauta and Lt. Gov.-elect Diego T. Benavente, FAA Regional Administrator William C. Withycombe said CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas deserves high praise and recognition for his planning, organization, and insightful leadership. Withycombe said the FAA and the CPA have a very productive working relationship that resulted in many unique and valuable programs that improved the aviation infrastructure of the Northern Marianas.

Jan. 10, 2003

SCC offers solutions to economic woes

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce delivered to all CNMI House and Senate members the business organization's Economic Stimulus Package that was presented to Gov. Juan N. Babauta in late December 2002. "Gov. Babauta, along with several of his administrative staff, and Sen. Pete Reyes attended this meeting where the Chamber, as announced, provided numerous suggestions and formulas to revive our economy, promote better financial management, and prepare for future economic situations in the CNMI," said SCC executive director Carlene Reyes-Tenorio.

PSS wins case on school projects

The Public School System said it has won its case against a private contractor that handled the construction of two schools—Sinapalo and Saipan Southern High School. Board of Education chairman Herman T. Guerrero said the CNMI Procurement and Supply Office has ruled that "PSS has the ultimate say" on the issue whether the projects are considered complete or not. The PSS, which has the expenditure authority over the projects, has not declared the two schools, which opened for classes last year, as entirely complete. The contractor, however, cited that the Department of Public Works, which is the contracting officer, had certified the projects as complete.



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday Ray K. Aguon! Wishing you all the greatest gifts life could offer! You deserve only the best! Greetings coming from your family and friends.

Chamber Installation Dinner



Saipan Chamber of Commerce keynote speaker Angel Ray T. Guerrero, standing second from right, poses with his parents, brother and relatives shortly before the start of the Chamber's 2010 board of directors installation dinner at the Hyatt Regency Saipan poolside in Garapan on Saturday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Acting governor Eloy S. Inos, third from left, and House minority leader Diego Benavente (R-Saipan), right, share a table with other Saipan Chamber of Commerce members and guests.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Douglas Brennan, left, present tokens of appreciation to former Chamber directors Marian Aldan-Pierce and Jim Arenovski, right.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Businessperson of the Year nominee Jay Santos of Triple J Saipan prepares to write his bid for a Gucci Web tote bag at the silent auction to benefit the Chamber's Educational Scholarship Fund.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



The Saipan Chamber of Commerce's 2011 officers and board of directors led by president Douglas Brennan take their oath of office.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Cancer survivor Angel Ray T. Guerrero, 16, delivers his keynote address.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Triple J Enterprises founder and president Robert "Bob" Jones, center, holds his Saipan Chamber of Commerce 2010 Businessperson of the Year trophy. He is joined on stage by his wife Margaret and son Jay Jones, who was also the Chamber's 2001 Businessperson of the Year.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, 2010 Businessperson of the year Robert "Bob" Jones, DFS Saipan president Marian Aldan-Pierce, and acting governor Eloy Inos.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Leave 'Huck' alone

© 2010, Los Angeles Times

The "N-word" has become so emotionally charged that its casual use can end a career, as radio shrink Laura Schlessinger discovered the hard way last year. But that doesn't mean it's a good idea to excise it from classic literature for fear of offending modern sensibilities.

Alan Gribben, an English professor at Auburn University, is working with NewSouth Books in Alabama to publish a joint edition of Mark Twain's classics, "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and "Tom Sawyer," in which the word "nigger"—used 219 times in "Huck Finn" alone—is replaced by the word "slave." Other politically correct alterations include a name change for menacing villain Injun Joe (now he's "Indian Joe"). Frankly, Scarlett, we give a darn about this kind of bowdlerism.

Gribben has a point when he says that many modern school districts and teachers are reluctant to put "Huck Finn" on the curriculum because of its liberal use of the offensive word. His goal is to broaden the book's readership and acceptability by rendering it inoffensive. "Huck Finn" is No. 4 on the list of most-banned books in American schools, according to author Herbert N. Foerstaal, and that's a shame, but attempting to sanitize it isn't the answer. Intelligent and sensitive discussion with students would be a better response.

Twain's masterwork is a moving reflection of attitudes in the pre-Civil War South (and of its author's postwar sensibilities, which were ahead of their time with regard to race but behind our own). It's the struggle of a white youth, Huck, to reconcile his recognition of the humanity and equality of an escaped slave with the views of a society that considers him little better than an animal and uses epithets to describe him. The language, then, is very much part of the story and the history. Trying to protect students from the full ugliness of racism by softening that language does a disservice to them, and it's all too easy to imagine the crimes against literature that would result if this kind of thing caught on. We hope nobody gives Gribben a copy of Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," because the Bard's attitude toward Shylock the Jew was distastefully Elizabethan.



The CNMI needs you! Become prepared!

Up to 4,000 jobless residents! Lawmakers work with Labor in filling up most 5,663 alien jobs with residents in 2011" screamed the headlines in Friday's *Saipan Tribune*.

Daily we read in the newspaper how bad our economy has gotten. There is no money to pay for salaries, no money to pay for government use of utilities, no money to pay vendors, no money to pay into the Retirement Fund because it is diverted elsewhere. Sadly many of us are literally experiencing this hardship. In fact, it is estimated that a lot more people will be enrolling for food stamps.

Currently there are 6,356 Chamorro and Carolinian and Americans on food stamps. Add to this number 3,234 of beneficiaries who are U.S. citizen children of alien workers. Many of our relatives are fleeing the islands to seek a better life. What are we to do?

Some of our government leaders are blaming the United States for our dilemma. Others are praying for a bunch of investors to come and sprinkle on us the money we need to save us. But I have not heard anyone talk about how we can help ourselves. We seem to just lie down and whine how awful life is.

Ladies and gentlemen, until we admit we are mainly at fault and recognize that *we must and can help ourselves*, we will never recover but remain in this pitiful situation. Remember, every time we point our finger to blame someone else for our sad state of affairs, there are at least three fingers pointing back at us.

Look, I do not profess to have the answers, nor do I profess to know that we can recover except with a miracle. But I do know that if we merely lie-down and whine, we will never recover. We must work ourselves out of this dreadful situation. Please let's not be both economically and morally bankrupt. Let us screw up our morale with courage and work ourselves out of this pit we have fallen into.

I learned a long time ago that "poverty is a state of the mind. But being broke is only a temporary situation!" Let's get up off the floor and start moving. We can and must do it! I have seen Japan, Korea and China do it. Why can't we? Where is our pride and will?

Yes, go ahead and get annoyed with me for badgering us to improve ourselves. I have had many big losses in my life but they only made me fight harder. Think of the events in our lives as a stream flowing by. At times the stream is calm; at times the stream is turbulent. But it keeps flowing. That is what life is all about. Yes, damn it, I am preaching because I believe in us!

We must develop a skill and learn a trade. I appeal to the young and the old to start now. We are never too old to learn a new skill. We must become the workers and builders and business people of our community.

Why can't we start replacing the foreign workers who will be leaving in a few years anyway? By procrastinating we only dig

By **ANTHONY PELLEGRINO**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



ourselves into a deeper hole. We are capable and as intelligent as anyone else. We can do the same work that our nonresident workers have been performing all the past years. It is our term to step in now. Let's do it!

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute is ready to help you learn a lucrative trade of your choice. Visit them and see how easy and enjoyable it is to learn a trade. Guam already has been knocking on NMII's door seeking people who want to work in Guam. Our local market also is ready to accept our trained tradesmen to perform the work needed.

I have also repeatedly mentioned that we can become the food basket for ourselves and Guam if we pick up our hoes and begin planting. Let us become professional farmers. Why do you think at my age I am starting a slaughterhouse? It is because I firmly believe that it will motivate the growing of livestock by our farmers and help our economy. This is a golden opportunity in perfect timing with our situation.

Think of all the jobs that it will add. Think of all the fresh meat we will be able to enjoy while exporting the surplus! Consider all the money that will stay here instead of exporting it to buy the meat we enjoy daily.

Now consider that we do the same in the growing of produce and fruits. Once our farmers realize that they can market the produce locally, they will be motivated to increase their farming. When we fulfill our demand, we can export the surplus to Guam.

Again consider all the money remaining here. Think of the pride we will enjoy knowing that we are capable of feeding ourselves and our neighbors. Think of the examples we will be setting for our children when they see us recreating a once devastated economy! Consider the extra money staying in our economy and the extra jobs created! And you know what? Uncle Sam will help us even more to recover when it sees us working to help ourselves.

Yes, there are ways out of the situation we are in. Let's not just think out of the box; let's get out of the box altogether! But this can only happen if we become involved and seize the opportunities awaiting us. Stop depending on the government and outside help. They will not and cannot help. They can assist but they are not the salvation.

See **THE CNMI** on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

A farewell to alms

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section.



Old-timers will recognize our allusion to Hemingway's celebrated novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, turned into a Cary Grant-Helen Hayes movie in 1932, with the roles reprised by Rock Hudson-Jennifer Jones before he was more than Doris Day's leading man.

First, Ernest Hemingway. Half of our lecture audiences in Dong Bei are English learners knowledgeable of literary Hemingway. Mr. V in Chinese is either *Wang* or *Wei*; our first name with the Spanish "J" pronounced like an "H" as in Jose, transcribed to either a *Hai Ming* (little shrimp) or *He Ming* (beautiful river). We went for the latter, making us a Chinese *Wei He Ming*, or an anglicized *He Ming Wei* with last name at the end. Got it? Immediately, we shared a reputation we did not deserve by phonetic osmosis.

Well, our farewell to alms comes after reappropriating a mendicant lifestyle we practiced previously. Not to counter Karidat's *raison d'être*, but our farewell to charity is not to be contrasted with the mendicancy of the soul.

We quit teaching in early 2009 to deal with a bothersome cervi-

cal spondylosis. We succeeded on the medical front, but we remain unemployed (to be told that "we can pay two for the cost of you," is no consolation) so we withdrew retirement contributions.

Two years without a steady income have us at the mercy of charity, and we augmented meager resources with the assistance of a close "lay sister" colleague from the SF Bay Area, and a Massachusetts-church-organist-chorister-cum-retired-school-teacher-40-year-friend (phrase reads better in German).

"You sure get around on a mendicant resource," my editor quips and my having once lived a lifestyle of two-suitcase monasticism with the operating principle: *if it don't fit, you don't need*, my travels for medical attention, and search for employ in America and China, nevertheless, look like we might have a rich Auntie tucked away somewhere.

Well, we've come to the end of our tether, and barring a last minute employment offer in the Marianas, it looks like we will be living off the practice of Chinglish phonetics in *Dong Bei* in the next two years.

It is not our intent to make fun of the intentional mendicant lifestyle, or make light of the monastic heritage. In fact, the monks gave birth to the practices associated with banking and finance, earnings, and capital formation. Their minimal needs resulted in excess income from animal husbandry and agriculture. They did not know where to spend the extra assets after building magnificent cathedrals and copying extant documents for posterity (that gave us libraries and later, universities). They let lay kin invest savings for profit. Handled prudently in a stable economy, money begets money.

The Medici of Florence produced four Popes and built the powerful Medici Bank. Not able to partake of solid food in their liquid fast, the monks invented carbohydrate-rich beer! Fine cheese and

wine come from monastic farms. The architecture of the medieval universe was constructed from the scholarship of observed natural order. Not unusual; Egypt noticed cyclical inundation every 365 days, thus, the solar calendar. The paradigm of the predictable Newtonian mechanical clock still guides us though quantum physics and the science of chaos already prevails.

The medieval social vehicle had disciplined guilds that honored masters and trained apprentices. The pyramidal structure of decision-making through a feudal pecking order was a suitable political process. The organized realms of the observed and speculated orders were good enough to maintain a way of life, a common culture.

The religious mode vowed poverty (detachment from wealth), chastity (single-mindedness on vocation), and obedience (embrace the mundane and duty to dictate of conscience). Their profound spirit journey was a knowing unafraid of limits and constraints, a doing that sought possibilities beyond borders and boundaries, and a being that exemplified the refinements of chivalry and patterns under the benevolence of a gracious and wise sovereign.

It should now be obvious that our mendicancy goes beyond begging bowls with saffron robes singing *Raghupati raghava rajaram* (aka, *Ram dham*, a favored Gandhi song), or playing the *harmonium*, plucking the *sitar*, and beating the *tabla* while singing the *Hare Krishna* mantra, or chanting *Ma-ra-na-tha* by the devouts of Iesu (Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew, a non-Christian, repeats this Aramaic chant for "Come, Lord Jesus" because he finds the sound soothes his nerves).

We are 21st century creatures where the *sanctum* is one with the *saeculum*! We are secular monastics; we find the sacred in the mundane. The holy is in the worldly, or it is not anywhere at all. The spirit world is in the midst of this world; elsewhere, we purvey illusions and parley delusions.

Many of us have fallen into a relationship of dependence on someone else's provision of security and welfare. That we have chosen mendicancy as our lifestyle awhile does not render the sense of dependence less, and herewith comes our desire to be more assertive in our farewell to alms, and still remain a responsible and free modern monk!

Mayhap, Chamolinia may learn to do the same with red-white-and-blue Uncle Samu'el by the Potomac, Haraguchi over at Gualo Rai, and Susupe's Tun Goryo near Joeten-Kiyu.

Do not tamper with the Constitution

By **ERIC WARD**

PROGRESSIVE MEDIA PROJECT

Politicians should stop monkeying with our Constitution—especially the 14th Amendment.

Ratified in 1868 after a long bloody civil war over slavery, the 14th Amendment granted citizenship to any person born in the United States, compelled states to adhere to due process and ensured equal protection under the law. This last clause confers on all people—not just citizens—the right to such protection.

At the start of this year, some of our nation's top state legislators joined hands in Washington with the legal institute of the Federation for American Immigration Reform to undercut the 14th Amendment. (FAIR has been listed as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.)

Altering the 14th Amendment's citizenship clause would amount to redefining what it means to be an American by modifying the terms of citizenship on barely concealed racial grounds. These state elected officials argue that trashing the 14th Amendment is crucial to controlling our nation's borders. But immigration reform cannot be achieved by undermining the individual liberties of American citizens. Attempts by state-level politicians to do so in the past have been disastrous to American democracy.

For instance, state anti-immigrant laws that require proof of citizenship have had a significant negative impact on the black community. Professor Tim Vercellotti of Rutgers University has found that the black vote was suppressed by 5.7 percent in states that demand voter identification.

While people of good conscience may reasonably disagree over the nation's immigration policies, efforts to tamper with the 14th Amendment must be rejected. Anyone born here deserves to be a citizen. This approach has worked well for 143 years. Millions of American families of every color have benefited from the generosity of spirit that the citizenship clause offers. There is no good reason to revoke it now.

Eric Ward is the national field director for the Center for New Community. He wrote this for Progressive Media Project, a source of liberal commentary on domestic and international issues; it is affiliated with The Progressive magazine.

Letters to the Editor

Article XII and your free enterprise rights

I can truly feel the dissatisfaction of Mr. Antonio Aldan and other locals who have land they want to sell. I brought the point out in the forum that locals were being denied their right to free enterprise and prosperity by Article XII. I also warned local people that they were being taken by local speculators who are buying up land cheap, as Mr. Aldan had just testified publicly. The average person may not know this but Article XII was agreed to by the U.S. mainly to prevent mainlanders and other nationals from speculating and buying up the CNMI during its formative years. But now, locals are becoming victims of other local speculators! In the animal world, they call it cannibalism when one consumes its own kind, which gives you an idea of how ugly and sad it is for me to see this happen to the local people.

Article XII did more than backfire. The economic vehicle of the CNMI is almost dead and the frame of that vehicle is dependent upon equity or ownership in the investments made. So if investors can't really own the factory or building, they just simply go where they can own or get a better deal. Article XII is an old rusted-out frame that needs changing and the motor of our economy (the tourists industry) also needs an overhaul. I commend MVA for taking steps to overhaul the outside of the vehicle by investing in promotions and advertisement outside the CNMI. But we need to fix and improve the engine itself—the tourist related attractions that will bring in tourist and the infrastructure of our tourist industry. For example: We are still mainly pushing WWII tourism when we need to be moving to more modern tourist attractions like eco-tourism. Mount Tapucahao is one of our best tourist stops but we haven't even built a decent road to the top. We are redoing the Back Road

THE CNMI

From Page 10

Our country is in need of skilled and trained citizens to rebuild our economy. None of us are too old to learn a new trade. Retirees and youth, male and female, are welcome. Now, more than ever, we must learn a trade. Become useful again. All that is required to start is a *desire to learn a trade*! Please contact the Northern Marianas Trades School and register immediately in one of the several courses offered. Come in any time or if you prefer call ahead at 235-8864.

Come and enroll in NMTI. Speak with some of the students and see what they have to say about their newfound goals. Yes, the CNMI needs us! We either help ourselves or resign ourselves to continuing despair. The burden is on us.

Next week I will continue this discussion so be prepared to read more on how to help ourselves or, if I annoy you, turn to the sports page. Remember the Ides of Dec. 31, 2014! Happy New Year!

(Isla Drive) and I just wonder if a bike lane is part of the plan. I could go on and on but the message should be clear: Even if Article XII is changed, we will still have to do some work to help everyone become successful and prosperous from our tourist industry.

I feel brother Aldan's disappointment and how he is being victimized by Article XII. I just hope he can get others to speak out about their right to free enterprise because there is talk of not doing anything about Article XII. Every citizen should have the right to sell his or her personally owned land to any citizen of the United States. The CNMI is recognized as U.S. soil by national and international law and sooner or later the feds are going to tell that to the CNMI officially—like they have done on other issues—if we don't do it ourselves! So we obviously have a conundrum and some people actually don't want to fix the obvious problem. Article XII also violates the right of equality as citizens and the ability to find prosperity as an American, which cannot be fully achieved by any citizen who does not and cannot own the place where they live. I can easily predict that Article XII will die as written and it is only a matter of when and how, so hang in there Mr. Aldan.

Ambrose Bennett

Kagman, Saipan

An election next year

As the people of the CNMI, we should call on the Senate and the House to hold a special election this year. We need to change the terms of the governor, lieutenant governor, mayor, and two senators from five years to three years. This way, we can have a general election next year.

We don't have to wait for a new governor, new senators, or a new mayor in 2014. Let's elect new leaders next year instead. Hold a special election this year and put this on the ballot so the people can decide. Hopefully, the voters have woken up and now realize the devastation that is upon us.

Demand it from your senators and representatives! I wonder if any of the 29 lawmakers would be willing to step up to the plate and do what is right for the people?

Ton Aldan

Kagman, Saipan

Loss of votes

One of the first orders of business for the Republican-controlled House was to strip D.C. Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton of her limited voice on the floor of the House. The measure was part of an opening day rules package that stripped delegates Donna Christiansen (D-Virgin Islands), Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa), Madeleine Bordallo (D-Guam) and Gregorio C. Sablan (D-Northern Marianas) and Commissioner Pedro Pierluisi (D-Puerto Rico) of the partial vote granted them in 1993 when Democrats ruled the chamber.

MarshaRose Joyner

Honolulu, HI

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲86 ▼79
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▼78
Yap	Showers	▲87 ▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲84 ▼76
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲84 ▼77
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲87 ▼79
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲84 ▼77

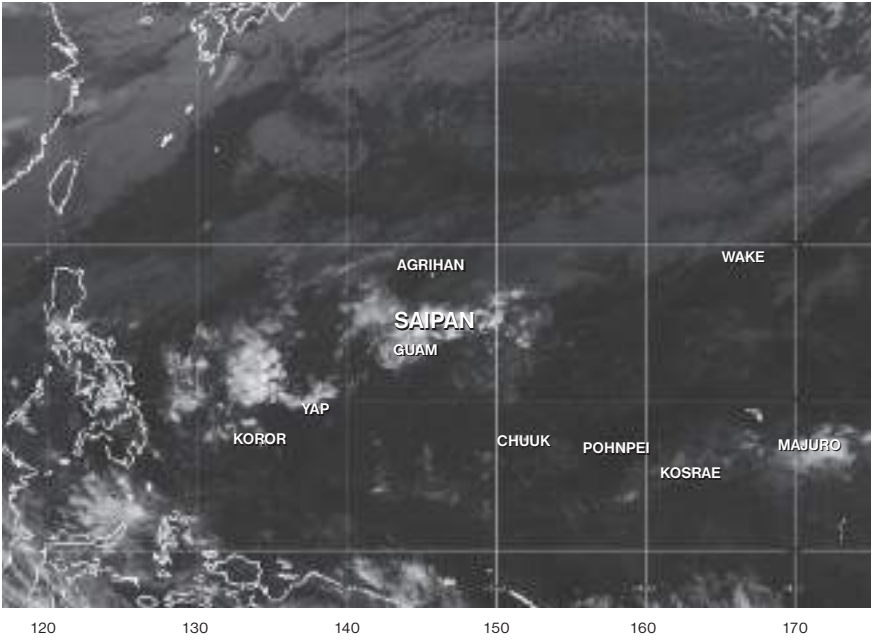
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲73 ▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲31 ▼14
Hong Kong	Showers	▲58 ▼42
Honolulu	Showers	▲76 ▼69
London	Showers	▲45 ▼35
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲63 ▼46
Manila	Thundershowers	▲84 ▼74
Melbourne	Thundershowers	▲78 ▼62
Miami	Thundershowers	▲79 ▼63
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲33 ▼24
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲44 ▼33
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲40 ▼34
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲41 ▼24
Rome	Cloudy	▲59 ▼48
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲40 ▼29
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲56 ▼50
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲28 ▼14
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲44 ▼33
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲38 ▼28

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
5:06 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet	
11:43 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	
6:21 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet	
11:19 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, JANUARY 9, 2011
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends west-southwestward from 25N175E to 18N157E then continues as a shear line passing over the CNMI to beyond 130E at 12N. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms exist north of Koror between 13N and 9N from 132E to 136E. elsewhere. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 400 miles northwest of this boundary. A surface trough running southward over the Marianas from Saipan to 10N144E is combining with the shear line to produce scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over the Marianas between 16N and 14N from 143E to 151E. Converging winds near a trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers over the Marshall Islands and Kosrae within 100 miles of a line from 5N161E to 7N179E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:03 PM
Tuesday	6:46 AM	6:03 PM
Wednesday	6:46 AM	6:04 PM
Thursday	6:46 AM	6:05 PM
Friday	6:47 AM	6:05 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:23 AM	10:50 PM
Tuesday	10:58 AM	11:36 PM
Wednesday	11:35 AM	
Thursday	12:13 PM	12:24 AM
Friday	12:55 PM	1:14 AM

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 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS**
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI**
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE**
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN**
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
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 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 16, 2010

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM				GUAM-SAIPAN			
C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily	C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
C09313	7:55am	8:45am	3, 6	C09596	6:35am	7:25am	3, 6
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C09596	7:00am	7:50am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily	C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:10am	8:45am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily
DL285	6:40am	9:15am	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	DL286	7:45pm	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
DL297	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily	DL288	8:00pm	12:30am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)				OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily	OZ120	9:50am	2:20am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	OZ607	9:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ604	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via KIX	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6	FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
CA988	3:15am	6:55am	1, 5 Dec 13, 17, 20, 24 & 27 only	CA987	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7 Dec 12, 16, 19, 23 & 26 only
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ716/603	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	DL172/286	8:05am	12:20am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
DL285/173	6:40am	10:15pm	1, 3, 4, 5, 6 via NRT	C0890/9606	10:55am	8:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
C09313/933	7:55am	9:25pm	3 via GUM	OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C09313/893	7:55am	11:00pm	3 via GUM-Palau	OZ702/605	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C09603/933	3:05pm	9:25pm	5 via GUM	PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:25am+1	6 via GUM
C09603/893	3:05pm	11:00pm	5 via GUM-Palau	PR110/C09596	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 4, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 ICN	C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM-Palau
OZ604/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7	C0892/9596	10:25pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM-Palau
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 2, 7 via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	C0934/9596	11:25pm	7:50am+1	4 via GUM
				C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:25am+1	3 via GUM
				C0934/9596	11:59pm	7:50am+1	5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG				HONG KONG-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/909	3:05pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:35pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ722/605	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN	C0910/9596	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; CA: Air China
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40	11:50	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
FRE 300	17:50	18:20	Daily				
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
				FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



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Business

Obama says economy moving in right direction

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama sees a clear and encouraging trend on the economy, citing fresh reports showing private-sector job growth and lower unemployment.

He used his weekly radio and Internet address Saturday to discuss the latest economic news and press for bipartisan action in the newly divided Congress on measures to spur growth. Obama presented the December jobs report in a positive light even though it fell short of what economists had been looking for and even though the drop in unemployment came partly because some people stopped looking for work.

The private sector added 103,000 new jobs in December and the unemployment rate fell from 9.8 percent to 9.4 percent.

“Now, we know that these numbers can bounce around from month to month. But the trend is clear,” said the president, whose 2012 re-election prospects may well hinge on the condition of the economy.

“We saw 12 straight months of private sector job growth—the first time that’s been true since 2006,” he said. The economy added 1.3 million jobs last year. And each quarter was stronger than the last, which means the pace of hiring is picking up, he said.

Obama attributed increasingly optimistic economic forecasts in part to the tax cut deal he negotiated last month with Republicans to extend Bush-era tax rates for all, along with unemployment benefits, a payroll tax cut and other tax breaks.

He urged businesses to take advantage of provisions including one that allows businesses to write off 100 per-



President Barack Obama congratulates Gene Sperling, his new chief of the National Economic Council, and other members of his economic team, during comments on nation's latest unemployment reports, at Thompson Creek Manufacturing in Landon, Md., Friday, Jan. 7, 2011. From

cent of their capital investment expenses in 2011. And the president said that the deal stands as an example of how Washington should work as he confronts a Congress where Republicans just assumed the majority in the House and expanded their ranks in the Senate.

“What we can’t do is refight the battles of the past two years that distract us from the hard work of moving our economy forward. What we can’t do is engage in the kinds of symbolic battles that so often consume Washington while the rest of America waits for us to solve problems,” the president said. “The tax cuts and other progress we made in December were a much-needed departure from that pattern. Let’s build on that admirable example.”

Republicans devoted their weekly address to spotlighting steps being taken by the new GOP House majority, including trimming House members’

operating budgets and moving to repeal Obama’s health care law.

The GOP contends the law extending coverage to 30 million uninsured Americans is a budget-busting job-killer. The Congressional Budget Office said this past week that repealing it would cost billions because the law’s numerous taxes, fees and cuts in Medicare spending would be lost.

Although the repeal is not expected to pass the Senate and would certainly be vetoed by Obama, the new House majority leader, Rep. Eric Cantor, R-Va., pledged that Republicans would try to replace it with “a new vision to improve our health care system without bankrupting our country.”

“We will provide Americans with the mainstream solutions they were denied when Democrats used dubious procedural tactics to jam through the bill along strictly partisan lines,” Cantor said.

Mortgage modifications daunting for homeowners

HELENA, Mont. (AP)—Laverl “Nick” Nicholson used to look out of his kitchen window at the weeping willows that mark the burial place of two of his two daughters. Then a debilitating car wreck left him unable to pay the \$220,000 he owed on his northwestern Montana home.

He tried for a year and a half to lower his mortgage payments through a loan modification, but the government-insured loan that he took out three years ago came with restrictions. The best the bank could offer him was a reduction of \$124 per month, leaving Nicholson with a \$1,585 payment that he still couldn’t afford.

The bank foreclosed last April, forcing him to move next door into a mobile home on two of the original property’s 10 acres that he had given his daughter a few years before.

Despite the government’s push to forestall foreclosures through mortgage modifications, situations like Nicholson’s have become common. Loan modifications often don’t work out because the homeowner doesn’t understand what’s out there, the lender is reluctant to write off part of the loan or, as in this case, the terms of a government-back loan limit what the bank can offer a borrower.

Today, the house near the small town of Thompson Falls is being sold in a sealed-bid process by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The asking price: \$87,000.

Nicholson, 50, is galled to see

something so dear being advertised so cheaply.

“I’ve been a blue-collar worker all my life and I worked hard for what I had. For it to be thrown back out there for this price and our family not given first option...,” Nicholson paused. “Things aren’t supposed to be this way in America. A man isn’t supposed to lose his home for \$220,000 only to sell it again for \$87,000.”

Nicholson, like many Americans, was drawn to a Federal Housing Administration loan to refinance his home because it offered good terms like a 3.5 percent down payment. He used the \$268,000 he borrowed against his home to invest in his business as a sawmill maintenance contractor working in the Northwest and across the country.

But with the car accident in 2008 that broke two vertebrae in his neck and a pre-existing degenerative disc disease in his back, he became unable to work. He began to miss mortgage payments, and the agency that bonded his business discovered his delinquency, causing him to lose his bond and his business.

Foreclosure proceedings began and it became necessary for Nicholson to seek mortgage relief, but the FHA-loan modification terms were limited. Loan servicer Wells Fargo was only able to offer him a 5.375 percent interest rate, the going market rate, and unlike non-FHA loans, his terms could only be extended 30 years instead of 40 years.

Feds push back in flap over blowout preventer test

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Federal investigators are pushing back against criticism they aren’t doing enough to keep companies involved in the Gulf oil spill away from any hands-on role in the forensic analysis of a key piece of equipment that failed to keep crude from entering the sea.

Rep. Edward J. Markey sent a letter Friday to the director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement detailing what he said are new concerns about conflicts of interest in the blowout preventer testing.

Markey’s letter said a Cameron International employee was allowed to operate components of the blowout preventer during the same week that an ocean energy bureau spokeswoman insisted company representatives are not

involved in testing the 300-ton device. Markey’s concerns are similar to those expressed recently by the U.S. Chemical Safety Board.

However, the same spokeswoman, Melissa Schwartz, said Saturday the Cameron worker, Ray Fain, wasn’t doing testing of the blowout preventer, but rather was involved in flushing the pods to keep them from eroding, a procedure that is being done periodically and requires proprietary Cameron computer equipment and a technician to operate.

Schwartz said the parties involved in the testing agreed months ago, in consultation with a federal judge, that the procedure was necessary and may need to be conducted every few months.

Representatives for Cameron, BP

PLC, Transocean Ltd., the Justice Department and lawyers for plaintiffs in lawsuits over the disaster have been allowed to monitor the examination of the blowout preventer at a NASA facility in New Orleans since testing began Nov. 16.

A Norwegian firm was hired to do the testing under the supervision of a federal investigation team.

But the safety board, and now Markey, D-Mass., said employees from Transocean and Cameron have been getting preferential and sometimes hands-on access to the blowout preventer. That would pose a conflict of interest because Transocean was responsible for maintaining the blowout preventer before the disaster and Cameron made the device.

it’s significant that Verizon will still have an announcement big enough to warrant a press conference in New York a week later, with Lowell McAdam, president and chief operating officer of Verizon Communications Inc., in attendance.

Germany detects illegal dioxin levels in poultry

BERLIN (AP)—German investigators have found excessive levels of cancer-causing dioxin in chicken—

the first such confirmation of tainted meat since the discovery that German farm animals had eaten contaminated feed, possibly for months. Three chickens—out of 15 samples of chicken, turkey and pork sent to the EU Commission—showed a dioxin concentration twice as high as legally allowed, an Agriculture Ministry spokesman said Saturday. The spokesman said the chicken meat had not been sold but eating it would not have been harmful in the short term

since the contamination levels were so low. He declined to be named in line with government policy.

Alaska pipeline shut down after leak discovered

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—The company that runs the Trans Alaska Pipeline has shut down oil production after a leak was discovered at a North Slope pump station. Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. said the leak was discovered Saturday and appeared to

be from a section of piping encased in concrete next to Pump Station 1—the first pump station on the 800-mile pipeline. The company says it’s too early to tell how much oil has spilled, but it appears to have been contained. The oil was leaking into the station’s booster pump building. Crews are on site and a crisis management team is working in Anchorage. Alyeska says immediate goals were to safely stop the leak, initiate cleanup efforts, and determine necessary repairs.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Verizon Wireless invites press to mystery event

NEW YORK (AP)—Verizon Wireless said Friday it will hold a press conference on Jan. 11, reigniting rumors that it will become the second U.S. carrier to sell Apple Inc.’s iPhone. At the International Consumer Electronics Show this week in Las Vegas, Verizon already made news with phones and tablets that will run on its high-speed, next-generation 4G wireless network. So

Nation

AZ shooting targets US congresswoman, kills 6

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—A gunman nearly unloaded a semiautomatic weapon at a busy supermarket Saturday during a public gathering for Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, wounding the Democrat and killing Arizona's chief federal judge and five others in an attempted assassination that left Americans questioning whether divisive politics had pushed the suspect over the edge.

The shooting targeted Giffords and left the three-term

congresswoman in critical condition after a bullet passed through her head. A shaken President Barack Obama called the attack "a tragedy for our entire country."

Giffords, 40, is a moderate Democrat who narrowly won re-election in November against a tea party candidate who sought to throw her from office over her support of the health care law. Anger over her position became violent at times, with her Tucson of-

fice vandalized after the House passed the overhaul last March and someone showing up at a recent gathering with a weapon.

Police say the shooter was in custody, and was identified by people familiar with the investigation as Jared Loughner, 22. U.S. officials who provided his name to the AP spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release it publicly.

His motivation was not immediately known, but Pima

County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik described him as mentally unstable and possibly acting with an accomplice. He said Giffords was among 13 people wounded in the melee that killed six people, including a 9-year-old girl, an aide for the Democratic lawmaker and U.S. District Judge John Roll, who had just stopped by to see his friend Giffords after attending Mass. Dupnik said the rampage ended only after two people tackled the gunman.

The sheriff blamed the vitriolic political rhetoric that has consumed the country, much of it occurring in Arizona.

"When you look at unbalanced people, how they respond to the vitriol that comes out of certain mouths about tearing down the government. The anger, the hatred, the bigotry that goes on in this country is getting to be outrageous," he said. "And unfortunately, Arizona, I think, has become the capital. We have become the mecca for prejudice and bigotry."

Giffords expressed similar concern, even before the shooting. In an interview after her office was vandalized, she referred to the animosity against her by conservatives, including Sarah Palin's decision to list Giffords' seat as one of the top "targets" in the midterm elections.

"For example, we're on Sarah Palin's targeted list, but the thing is, that the way that she has it depicted has the crosshairs of a gun sight over our district. When people do that, they have to realize that there are consequences to that action," Giffords said in an interview with MSNBC.

In the hours after the shooting, Palin issued a statement in which she expressed her "sincere condolences" to the family of Giffords and the other victims.

During his campaign effort to unseat Giffords in November, Republican challenger Jesse Kelly held fundraisers where he urged supporters to help remove Giffords from office by join-

ing him to shoot a fully loaded M-16 rifle. Kelly is a former Marine who served in Iraq and was pictured on his website in military gear holding his automatic weapon and promoting the event.



ing him to shoot a fully loaded M-16 rifle. Kelly is a former Marine who served in Iraq and was pictured on his website in military gear holding his automatic weapon and promoting the event.

"I don't see the connection," between the fundraisers featuring weapons and Saturday's shooting, said John Ellinwood, Kelly's spokesman. "I don't know this person, we cannot find any records that he was associated with the campaign in any way. I just don't see the connection."

"Arizona is a state where people are firearms owners—this was just a deranged individual."

Law enforcement officials said members of Congress

reported 42 cases of threats or violence in the first three months of 2010, nearly three times the 15 cases reported during the same period a year earlier. Nearly all dealt with the health care bill, and Giffords was among the targets.

The shooting cast a pall over the Capitol as politicians of all stripes denounced the attack as a horrific. Capitol police asked members of Congress to be more vigilant about security in the wake of the shooting. Obama dispatched his FBI chief to Arizona.

Giffords, known as "Gabby," tweeted shortly before the shooting, describing her "Congress on Your Corner" event: "My 1st Congress on Your Corner starts now. Please stop by to let me know what is on your mind or tweet me later."

"It's not surprising that today Gabby was doing what she always does, listening to the hopes and concerns of her neighbors," Obama said. "That is the essence of what our democracy is about."

Mark Kimball, a communications staffer for Giffords, described the scene as "just complete chaos, people screaming, crying." The gunman fired at Giffords and her district director and started shooting indiscriminately at staffers and others standing in line to talk to the congresswoman, Kimball said.

"He was not more than three or four feet from the congresswoman and the district director," he said.

Doctors were optimistic about Giffords surviving as she was responding to commands from doctors. "With guarded optimism, I hope she will survive, but this is a very devastating wound," said Dr. Richard Carmona, the former surgeon general who lives in Tucson.



An Investigator photographs the area outside a Safeway store after a gunman targeting Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz) opened fire in Tucson, Ariz. on Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011.

Details of suspect in Ariz rampage slowly emerge

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—An initial portrait of a the man accused of shooting Arizona Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in the head in an attack that also killed six people outside a Tucson grocery store slowly began to emerge Saturday, as authorities described a young man with a troubled past and neighbors recalled a 22-year-old who often kept to himself.

One former classmate said the accused gunman, Jared Loughner, often did his own thing. Another described him as a student who disrupted class with occasional outbursts.

Neighbors said Loughner wasn't hostile toward anyone but certainly didn't warm up to anyone, either.

"He was a guy in high school who definitely had his opinions on stuff and didn't seem to care what people thought of him," said Grant Wiens, 22, who told The Associated Press he went to high school and had a class at Pima Community College with Loughner.

Loughner was in custody Saturday after authorities said he opened fire outside a grocery store as Giffords, a



This photo obtained from the 2006 Mountain View High School yearbook shows Jared L. Loughner.

Democrat, met with voters. The rampage left the congresswoman wounded. Arizona's chief federal judge, a 9-year-old girl and four others were killed.

Authorities said the accused gunman targeted the three-term congresswoman, but an exact motivation was not immediately known. Many questioned whether the nation's polarized political climate had played a role, even as Loughner's political views remained unclear late Saturday.

Pima County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik described the gunman as mentally unstable and said he possibly acted with an

accomplice.

Federal law enforcement officials poured over versions of a MySpace page that belonged to Loughner and over a YouTube video published weeks ago under an account "Clas-situp10" and linked to him. The MySpace page, which was removed within minutes of the gunman being identified by officials, included a mysterious "Goodbye friends" message published hours before the shooting and exhorted his friends to "Please don't be mad at me."

On his MySpace page, Loughner spoke of how he liked to read and he also wrote repeatedly about literacy, complaining that the rate was especially low in the congressional district where he lived.

"The majority of people, who reside in District-8 are illiterate hilarious. I don't control your English grammar structure, but you control your English grammar structure," he said.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Wiens also said Loughner used to speak critically about religion. He also talked about how he liked to smoke pot.

ACROSS THE NATION

Fiery package in DC triggers memories of anthrax

WASHINGTON (AP)—Postal workers who returned to work Saturday said a package that ignited at a government mail facility conjured painful memories of the anthrax attacks that killed two of their colleagues in 2001. The fiery package found Friday, which was addressed to Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, followed two packages that ignited Thursday in Maryland state government mailrooms. It halted government mail until bomb-sniffing dogs could sweep the D.C. facility. Mail processing resumed Saturday morning after a meeting with workers, the local postmaster and the workers' union.

Sheriff: Suspicious package at Giffords HQ

TUCSON, Ariz. (AP)—A loud noise rattled more than 100 people attending a candle light vigil on Saturday near the headquarters of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, where authorities were investigating a suspicious package hours after she

was wounded in a shooting rampage in Tucson. Police department spokesman Lt. Fabian Pacheco said an officer checking Giffords' office had found "a real strange" device that he said resembled a coffee can and had writing on it. Pacheco would not disclose what the writing said. A bomb squad had been working to render the device safe before the loud noise was heard.

US says American woman said jailed in Iran is free

WASHINGTON (AP)—An American woman reportedly arrested in Iran for espionage has been located by U.S. officials and is safe and not in Iranian custody, the State Department said Saturday. "We have located the U.S. citizen who appears to have been the subject of the reports and confirmed that the individual is safe," spokesman Mark Toner said. "She is not in Iran." A U.S. official who declined to be identified due to privacy concerns, said the woman, identified by Iranian authorities as 34-year-old Hal Fayalan, is in Istanbul, Turkey and that American consular officials have been in touch with her.

Asia

Filipinos swarm to raucous religious procession

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Hundreds of thousands of Roman Catholics joined a raucous religious procession in Manila on Sunday to honor a centuries-old black statue of Jesus Christ that they believe possesses mystical powers.

Nearly 400 people fainted or were injured as barefoot devotees surged forward over iron railings to try and touch the 404-year-old image of Christ—known as the Black Nazarene—at the end of morning mass in a Manila park.

Police said the crowd of about 1 million people that gathered at Rizal Park could swell later Sunday. About 3,500 police secured the 3-mile (5-kilometer) route that took the statue from the park to a popular church in Quiapo district, Manila police chief Roberto Rongavilla said.

The wooden statue of Christ, crowned with thorns and bearing a cross, is believed to have been brought from Mexico to Manila in 1606 by Spanish missionaries. The ship that carried it caught fire, but the charred statue survived and was then called the Black Nazarene.



Barefoot Filipino Catholic devotees struggle to touch the image of the Black Nazarene in a raucous procession for its annual festival Sunday Jan. 9, 2011 in Manila, Philippines. AP

Some believe the statue's survival of fires and earthquakes through the centuries, and intense bombings during World War II, are a testament to its mystical powers. The Philippines, Asia's most pre-

dominantly Christian nation, is 80 percent Catholic.

As the statue was pulled on a carriage by rope through Manila's streets, swarms of male worshippers jostled their way toward the Black Nazarene to

touch, kiss, or wipe towels and handkerchiefs on it to acquire its believed powers.

Jose Garcia, 45, clutching a rosary in one hand, said he believed his yearly attendance at the procession had cured

North Korea again proposes talks with South Korea

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea reiterated Saturday a proposal for unconditional talks with South Korea to ease tensions on the divided peninsula.

The latest offer comes days after South Korea dismissed earlier calls by the North for negotiations.

Meanwhile, North Korea's official Twitter account appeared to have been hacked on Saturday, which is believed to be the birthday of leader Kim Jong Il's youngest son and heir-apparent, Kim Jong Un. Four messages critical of the Kims remained posted in the account for 10 hours as of late Saturday.

"Let's make a new world by removing our people's sworn enemy—traitor Kim Jong Il and his son Kim Jong Un!" one

message read. Another urged the North's military to "point the gun" at Kim Jong Il for diverting money to the country's missile and nuclear programs.

Tensions between the two sides escalated after a North Korean artillery barrage on a South Korean-held island near their disputed maritime border killed four South Koreans in November.

The attack—the first on a civilian area since the 1950-53 Korean War—occurred in waters not far from where a North Korean torpedo allegedly sank a South Korean warship eight months earlier. That attack killed 46 sailors. North Korea has denied responsibility.

"We do not want to see the present South Korean authori-

ties pass the five-year term of their office idly without North-South dialogue," the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea said in a statement carried by the country's official Korean Central News Agency.

"There is neither conditionality in the North's proposal for dialogue nor need to cast any doubt about its real intention," it said.

North Korea also proposed holding separate talks later this month or in early February on other issues, including resumption of a suspended joint tourism project and cooperation at an industrial complex in the border city of Kaesong. The North also suggested restarting suspended Red Cross talks on humanitarian issues.

North Korea said its offer was "a measure of good faith for opening the channel of dialogue and improving the North-South relations."

"The South Korean authorities should discard any unnecessary misgiving, open their hearts and positively respond to the North's proposal," the statement said.

Unification Ministry Chun Hae-sung said South Korea would review the latest offer, noting North Korea has not sent an official request for talks.

North Korea called this past week for unconditional and early talks with South Korea, but Seoul dismissed the offer and urged the North to show it has changed through actions, not words.

probably what saved him," said Panares, head of the Danao police women and children's section.

The boy told police his mother left him to his grandparents a few months after he was born.

He said his grandmother sent him off to sea early on Monday when he should have been at school because they needed fish to eat.

"They are very poor. The municipal government had to give bus fare to his grandmother so she could come here to pick up her grandson," Panares said.

"He looked a lot better today and is laughing again. I told him jokes so he would not feel down. He just wants to go back home."

Philippine boy survives three days at sea

MANILA (AFP)—A 15-year-old Philippine schoolboy who was sent alone to sea by his grandmother to fish survived three days adrift after his boat engine failed, local authorities said Friday.

The hungry, thirsty and exhausted boy, sixth-grader Mark Sanico, washed ashore aboard his tiny dugout in the central city of Danao on Thursday, and is recovering at a local hospital, police officer Cherry Panares told AFP.

"He was very weak. He had had no food or drink for three days. He said he had some boiled ground corn, but it spoiled early

so he had nothing to eat," Panares told AFP by telephone.

The big waves meant he could not cast his net out to get food, she added.

Clad only in a shirt and shorts, the boy told police the boat had drifted at least 90 kilometers (56 miles) across the Camotes Sea from his coastal hometown of Villaba on Leyte island without any other mariner noticing his plight.

The boy told police he saw only another fishing boat on Wednesday and no other vessels, but the other fisherman apparently did not see him when he waved for help, Panares said.



She praised the boy's resilience, saying a life spent in poverty had probably ensured his survival.

"He's one tough kid. That's



ACROSS THE NATION

Norway: Talks aimed at reviving PH peace

OSLO, Norway (AP)—Talks between the Philippines government and communist rebels aimed at reviving peace negotiations to end a 42-year insurgency in the Asian nation will be held in Oslo next week, a Norwegian official said Friday. The meetings will be held Jan. 14-18 at an undisclosed location in the Norwegian capital, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Ragnhild Imerslund told the AP in an e-mail. "The talks will try to prepare for a possible resumption of formal negotiations," Imerslund said. Negotiations between the Philippines government and the Marxist umbrella group National Democratic Front, or NDFP, are expected to include a rebel request to release Tirso Alcantara, a rebel commander on the main island of Luzon.

Chinese official suspended over lead poisoning

BEIJING (AP)—An environmental official in eastern China was suspended after a battery factory sickened more than 200 children with lead poisoning, authorities said Sunday. China is the world's largest producer and consumer of lead, a key component in lead-acid batteries needed for the growing number of vehicles in the country. New cases of lead poisoning regularly occur, underscoring the toll pollution is taking on the health of rural Chinese. Zhao Yiping, the head of the local environmental protection bureau in Huaining County in Anhui province, was suspended from his duties after tests confirmed that lead emissions from Borui Battery Co. Ltd. had polluted the nearby soil, the county government said in a statement.

his crippled son who now can walk. Another son was recently diagnosed with a heart ailment that requires surgery, which he said he could never afford. "I need another miracle from God. Please senor, save my other son," he said to the statue.

In the Philippines, poverty affects about a third of the more than 90 million population.

Manila Archbishop Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales said he was moved by the large turnout. "It was simply overwhelming seeing that sea of humanity," he told The Associated Press. "I asked, 'Jesus, can you see these people? Please answer their prayers.'"

Rosales said he prayed for peace in the Philippines, which has grappled with decades-old communist and Muslim insurgencies.

Sri Lanka accused of blocking slain editor probe

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—A media rights group has accused the Sri Lankan government of blocking an investigation into the killing of a newspaper editor two years ago, saying its indifference in solving the crime had made it an accomplice. On the second anniversary of his death, Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said Lasantha Wickrematunge's killers remained at large and accused Sri Lanka's government of stymieing an investigation. Wickrematunge, editor of The Sunday Leader newspaper, was shot dead by motorcycle-riding gunmen while driving to work on Jan. 8, 2009. The paper had been critical of the government's conduct of the decades-long war against the now-defeated Tamil Tiger rebels, and reported on alleged human rights violations and government corruption.

Cold weather kills more in northern India

LUCKNOW, India (AP)—Near-freezing temperatures have killed more than two dozen people in northern India in recent days despite government efforts to distribute blankets and medicine to the poor, an official and a news report said.

In worst-hit Uttar Pradesh state, at least 22 people—many of them homeless—died over the past three days, pushing the death toll from two weeks of cold weather to 63, Ram Mohan Srivastav, a top government official, said Saturday.

Uttar Pradesh is one of India's poorest states and nearly a fifth of its 180 million people are homeless, according to state government statistics.

World

Al-Sadr hammers anti-US message in 1st Iraq speech

NAJAF, Iraq (AP)—Muqtada al-Sadr lambasted the American “enemy” in Iraq during his first speech in the country since returning from exile, fiery rhetoric from a new powerbroker in the government that will make it difficult to extend the U.S. military deployment beyond the end of this year.

The young Shiite cleric once

blamed for some of the country’s worst sectarian violence also told his followers that such bloodshed would no longer be tolerated and appealed to them to show unity in the face of the country’s many problems.

The 35-minute speech on Saturday in the Shiite holy city of Najaf was a public debut for the young cleric after nearly four years in voluntary exile in neighboring Iran, and it seemed at times like a combination of a rock concert and religious sermon. After walking out to a podium draped in black cloth, al-Sadr had to wait almost a full five minutes for the rapturous crowd of around 20,000 people to quiet down enough for him to speak.

Some of the young men packed into the street outside the cleric’s family home in Najaf slept on the ground with only cardboard slabs to protect them from the cold concrete. It gave them a prime seat to see their idol, and much of the crowd was openly weeping when al-Sadr took the stage. The young men pressed up against the concrete barriers and security guards, and after the cleric left, hundreds of supporters lingered by the podium, as though hoping for an encore performance.

Those in Najaf and thousands of Iraqis across the nation watching on TV saw a performance focused on the issue that has been the cornerstone of the cleric’s ideology and popularity: resistance to any American presence in Iraq.

“We are still resisters, and we are still resisting the occupier militarily and culturally and by



A supporter of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr holds up his photograph as the faithful gather to watch the cleric’s first public appearance since returning from nearly four years of self-imposed exile in Najaf, south of Baghdad, Iraq, Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011.

all the means of resistance. Repeat after me: No, no for the occupier. Let’s have all the world hear that Iraqi people reject the occupier,” he shouted. The crowd thundered along with him, pumping their fists in the air.

Unlike many Iraqi politicians who lived in exile while Saddam Hussein was in power, al-Sadr remained in Iraq—a fact that has earned him much of his popularity. Just a few hundred yards (meters) from where he al-Sadr spoke Saturday stands a small memorial marking the spot where the cleric’s father and two brothers were gunned down, allegedly by Saddam’s agents.

After the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, al-Sadr quickly became one of the most vocal people rallying against the Americans. His Mahdi Army militia, armed with AK-47s and a deep devotion to its leader, battled U.S. forces through the streets of Najaf in 2004, when other Shiite leaders were cooperating with the Americans.

In 2006 and 2007, when sectarian bloodshed was at its height, his militia members were accused of some of the most vicious attacks against Sunnis, including torture with

drills and electrocution.

But aiming now to become a mature political movement, al-Sadr in his speech sought to put the group’s brutal reputation behind it.

“My dear, if any conflict happened between the brothers, let’s forget this page and turn it over forever and let’s live united,” he said. “We have had enough fighting.”

Al-Sadr left for Iran in 2007, in part to bolster his theological credentials—a necessity for a religious leader in this Shiite-dominated country—but also to escape an arrest warrant for allegedly killing another cleric. While he studied and deepened his ties to Iran, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki sent in the army to crush al-Sadr’s militias in Basra and eastern Baghdad.

After the bruising defeat, al-Sadr’s influence appeared to have exhausted itself.

But his movement regrouped, and a disciplined performance in the March election earned the Sadrists 40 seats in parliament, political clout and a return to prominence. His decision to throw his support behind al-Maliki all but gave the prime minister a second term after months of negotiations.

Anti-U.S.
Iraqi
Shiite cleric

Muqtada al-Sadr

Early life

Born Around 1974, probably in Iraq

Family Father, a powerful Shiite cleric, killed in 1999 for opposing Saddam Hussein

Education Hawsa Seminary, Najaf, Iraq

Political leader

2003

- As one of the most vocal critics of the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq, calls members of the new U.S.-appointed government “puppets”
- Threatens to form a militia and an Islamic state in Iraq

2004

- Iraqi judge issues arrest warrant for him in connection with the murder of a rival Shiite cleric
- Militia, the Mahdi Army, begins on-and-off fighting with U.S. troops, is blamed for some of Iraq’s worst sectarian violence

2007

Flees, reportedly living in the Iranian holy city of Qom for religious studies

2010

Supporters win 40 seats in Iraqi parliament

2011

Returns to his home in Najaf

© 2011 MCT
Source: Global Security, Los Angeles Times
Graphic: Pat Carr

Surprise visit by Obasanjo to Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP)—Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo made an unannounced visit to Ivory Coast, arriving late Saturday for a private meeting with the country’s defiant president in a final effort to get him to cede power after losing the recent election.

An Associated Press reporter was present when the Nigerian leader arrived at the luxury Pullman Hotel surrounded by bodyguards. He declined to comment and was whisked away to his suite on the hotel’s 9th floor, where he spent around an hour before re-emerging to head to the presidential palace.

Incumbent president Laurent Gbagbo has remained in office, insisting that he won—a victory handed to him by the head of the constitutional council, a member of his inner circle, who canceled votes from his opponent’s strongholds.

The spokesman for Alassane Ouattara, who is considered to be the legitimate president-

elect after results issued by the electoral commission, said that Obasanjo came to meet with Ouattara immediately after leaving the palace.

Ali Coulibaly, the spokesman, said that Obasanjo will see both leaders a second time on Sunday.

The international community has been unanimous in recognizing Ouattara as the winner of the election because the results issued by the electoral body were certified by the United Nations in accordance with a 2005 peace deal. The U.N. sent over 900 observers who fanned out across the country to watch as the votes were cast and who later reviewed results poll station-by-poll station.

While Gbagbo continues to occupy the presidential palace, Ouattara has been forced to live in a hotel guarded by some 800 U.N. troops. Over Christmas, Gbagbo’s troops sealed the exits to the hotel and refuse to let anyone in or out.

14 decapitated bodies found in Mexico resort city

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP)—The bodies of 15 men, all but one of them headless, were found on a street outside a shopping center in Acapulco on Saturday as police reported 27 people slain in the Pacific resort in less than a day.

The decapitated victims, all of whom appeared to be in their 20s, were discovered in an area not frequented by tourists.

Handwritten signs left with the bodies were signed by “El Chapo’s People”—a reference to the Sinaloa cartel, headed by drug lord Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman—said Fernando Monreal Leyva, director of investigative police for Guerrero state, where Acapulco is located.

The narco-messages indicated the Sinaloa cartel killed them for trying to intrude on the gang’s turf and extort resi-

dents. Authorities said there were at least three minors among the dead.

Mexico’s drug cartels have increasingly taken to beheading their victims in a grisly show of force, but Saturday’s discovery was the largest single group of decapitation victims found in recent years.

In 2008, a group of 12 decapitated bodies were piled outside the Yucatan state capital of Merida. The same year, nine headless men were discovered in the Guerrero state capital of Chilpancingo.

Acapulco has been the site of fierce battles between drug gangs, and this weekend got off to a bloody start with 27 people killed there from Friday evening to early Saturday, Leyva said.

The dead included two police officers cut down on a main bayside avenue in

front of tourists and locals; six people who were shot dead and stuffed in a taxi, their hands and feet bound; and four others elsewhere in the city. Two police officers were wounded when armed men attacked a police post in the city’s Emiliano Zapata district.

“We are coordinating with federal forces and local police to reinforce security in Acapulco and investigating to try to establish the motive and perpetrators of these incidents,” Monreal said.

The wave of violence in one of Mexico’s biggest resorts was condemned by the federal government.

“Reprehensible acts of violence such as these underscore the need to fight with determination against organized crime,” a statement from the Interior Ministry said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Doctor: Comatose ex-Israeli PM responds to pinches

JERUSALEM (AP)—The personal doctor of Ariel Sharon says the comatose former Israeli prime minister responds to pinches and opens his eyes when spoken to. Dr. Shlomo Segev made the remarks in a program broadcast Saturday on Israeli television that coincided with the fifth anniversary of the massive stroke that incapacitated the ex-prime minister. The 82-year-old Sharon is a former war hero who led Israel from 2001 until the 2006 stroke that left him comatose. Severe hemorrhaging

caused significant brain damage and he has been in a vegetative state since. Former Sharon spokesman Raanan Gissin told The AP there has been no change in Sharon’s condition.

At least 9 die in S.Sudan attacks ahead of vote

JUBA, Sudan (AP)—Two rebel groups clashed with Southern Sudan’s military ahead of the region’s historic independence referendum, leaving at least nine dead. A top security chief said Saturday he suspected the groups were trying to depress voter turnout in some areas, though most analysts expect a peace-

ful vote. Separate clashes in the disputed border region of Abyei were also reported, but officials from the south and north gave widely varying accounts of the fighting, ranging from one wounded to nine dead. The weeklong referendum begins Sunday and is likely to see Africa’s largest country split in two. In order for the referendum to pass, a simple majority must vote for independence and 60 percent of the 3.9 million registered voters must cast ballots.

Venezuela govt building burns, arson suspected

CARACAS, Venezuela

(AP)—A fire ripped through a Venezuelan government office belonging to the agency that handles land takeovers Saturday, and officials said there was evidence pointing to arson. The blaze damaged 70 percent of the regional headquarters of the National Land Institute in the western state of Zulia, Agriculture and Land Minister Juan Carlos Loyo said. “There is a combination of evidence, very strong, that appears to suggest it was not a natural fire but one in which a group of individuals were involved,” Loyo said in comments broadcast by state television. He did not elaborate.

Focus

WikiLeaks subpoenas spill out into public realm

WASHINGTON (AP)—Investigative documents in the WikiLeaks probe spilled out into the public domain Saturday for the first time, pointing to the Obama administration's determination to assemble a criminal case no matter how long it takes and how far afield authorities have to go.

Backed by a magistrate judge's court order from Dec. 14, the newly disclosed documents sent to Twitter Inc. by the U.S. attorney's office in Alexandria, Va., demand details about the accounts of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and Pfc. Bradley Manning, the Army intelligence analyst who's in custody and suspected of supplying WikiLeaks with classified information.

The others whose Twitter accounts are targeted in the prosecutors' demand are Birgitta Jonsdottir, an Icelandic parliamentarian and one-time WikiLeaks collaborator; Dutch hacker Rop Gonggrijp; and U.S. programmer Jacob Appelbaum. Gonggrijp and Appelbaum have worked with WikiLeaks in the past.

Justice Department spokesman Matt Miller declined comment on the disclosure in the case, which intensified following WikiLeaks' latest round of revelations with the posting of classified State Department diplomatic cables. The next day, Nov. 29, Attorney General Eric Holder vowed that anyone found to have violated U.S. law in the leaks would be prosecuted.

Assange said the U.S. move amounted to harassment, and he pledged to fight it.

"If the Iranian government was to attempt to coercively obtain this information from journalists and activists of foreign nations, human rights groups around the world would speak out," he told The Associated Press in an e-mail.

Legal experts have said one possible avenue for federal prosecutors would be to establish a conspiracy to steal classified information.

"They are trying to show that Manning was more than a source of the information to a reporter and rather that Assange and Manning were trying to jointly steal information from the U.S. government," said Mark Rasch, a former prosecutor on computer crime and espionage cases in the Justice Department.

The problem is distinguishing between WikiLeaks as a news organization and those who re-published the same classified information, like The New York Times, said Rasch, director of cybersecurity and privacy consulting at CSC, a Falls Church, Va., technology company.

"How do they prosecute?" asked Rasch. "The answer is by establishing a unity of interest between Manning and Assange. Make it a theft case and not just a journalist publishing information case."

The demand by prosecutors sought information dating to Nov. 1, 2009, several months before an earlier WikiLeaks release.

Manning is in a maximum-security military brig at Quantico, Va., charged

with leaking video of a 2007 U.S. Apache helicopter attack in Baghdad that killed a Reuters news photographer and his driver. WikiLeaks posted the video on its website in April of last year. Three months later, WikiLeaks posted some 90,000 leaked U.S. military records on the war in Afghanistan, including unreported incidents of Afghan civilian killings as well as covert operations against Taliban figures.

The main target of the prosecutors' document demands is most likely the IP addresses of the Twitter users, said Stanford University law professor Larry Lessig, founder of the Center for Internet & Society, Stanford.

Getting a list of IP addresses—specific numerical address that can identify individual computers as they interact over the Internet—could help prosecutors an effort to draw specific connections between individuals, their computers, and the information they share.

"It's not very hard for an investigator to put these things together and come back and identify a specific individual," Lessig said.

In a statement about the demand to

Twitter for information, WikiLeaks said it has reason to believe Facebook and Google, among other organizations, have received similar court or-

information about accounts run by Assange and the others.

A copy of the demand, sent to the AP by Jonsdottir, said the information sought was "relevant to an ongoing criminal investigation" and ordered Twitter not to disclose its existence to any of the targets.

But a second document, dated Jan. 5, unsealed the court order. Although the reason wasn't made explicit in the document, WikiLeaks said it had been unsealed "thanks to legal action by Twitter."

Twitter declined comment on the matter, saying only that its policy is to notify its users, where possible, of government requests for information.

Neither Facebook Inc. nor Google Inc. immediately returned messages Saturday.

The Obama administration volunteered little new information about its criminal investigation against Assange and WikiLeaks after news of its subpoena leaked. Under rules

governing grand jury investigations—in which U.S. prosecutors present evidence and testimony to selected private citizens behind closed doors to seek their approval to formally file charges—government lawyers are not al-

lowed to discuss the case until charges are announced publicly.

It was not immediately clear how the data being requested would be useful to investigators. Twitter's logs could reveal the Internet addresses that Assange and WikiLeaks supporters have used, which could help track their locations as they traveled around the world. The information also might identify others with official access to WikiLeaks' account on Twitter who so far have escaped scrutiny.

Assange's lawyer, Mark Stephens, said targeting Twitter showed how desperate U.S. officials were to pin a crime on the WikiLeaks founder.

Stephens told the BBC it was an attempt to "shake the electronic tree in the hope some kind of criminal charge drops out the bottom of it."

Jonsdottir said in a Twitter message that she had "no intention to hand my information over willingly." Appelbaum, whose Twitter feed suggested he was traveling in Iceland, said he was apprehensive about returning to the U.S.

"Time to try to enjoy the last of my vacation, I suppose," he tweeted.

Gonggrijp praised Twitter for notifying him.

"It appears that Twitter, as a matter of policy, does the right thing in wanting to inform their users when one of these comes in," Gonggrijp said. "Heaven knows how many places have received similar subpoenas and just quietly submitted all they had on me."

The news of the subpoena follows months of angry back and forth between U.S. officials and WikiLeaks, which has released reams of secret U.S. military documents on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and more recently, thousands of classified U.S. diplomatic cables.

U.S. officials say posting the military documents put informers' lives at risk, and that revealing diplomatic cables has made other countries reluctant to deal with American officials.

WikiLeaks denies that its postings put any lives at risk and says Washington merely is acting out of embarrassment over the revelations contained in the cables.

WikiLeaks and its tech-savvy staff have relied on American Internet and finance companies to raise funds, disseminate material and get their message out.

WikiLeaks' frequently updated Facebook page, for example, counts 1.5 million fans and its Twitter account has a following of more than 600,000. Until recently, the group raised donations via U.S. companies PayPal Inc., MasterCard Inc., and Visa Inc., and hosted material on Amazon.com's servers.

But the group's use of American companies has come under increasing pressure as it continues to reveal U.S. secrets. PayPal and the credit card companies severed their links with site and Amazon.com booted WikiLeaks from its servers last month.

The actions sparked a cyberfight with WikiLeaks sympathizers, who attacked the company's sites for days.

Assange is currently out on bail in Britain, where he is fighting extradition to Sweden on sex crimes allegations. His next hearing is scheduled for Tuesday.



In this June 23, 2010 file photo, a Twitter sign hangs at the offices of Twitter Inc., in San Francisco.



This Aug. 14, 2010 file photo shows WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in Stockholm, Sweden.

Health & Fitness

US says too much fluoride causing splotchy teeth

By MIKE STOBBE
AP MEDICAL WRITER

ATLANTA (AP)—In a remarkable turnabout, federal health officials say many Americans are now getting too much fluoride because of its presence not just in drinking water but in toothpaste, mouthwash and other products, and it's causing splotches on children's teeth and perhaps more serious problems.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced plans Friday to lower the recommended level of fluoride in drinking water for the first time in nearly 50 years, based on a fresh review of the science.

The announcement is likely to renew the battle over fluoridation, even though the addition of fluoride to drinking water is considered one of the greatest public health successes of the

Government lowers recommended level of fluoride in water

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommended lowering the level of fluoride to 0.7 milligrams per liter of water. Since 1962, the standard has fluctuated between 0.7 and 1.2 milligrams. The change comes after a study found increasing numbers of a fluorosis, or discoloration of the teeth, among adolescents.

Dental fluorosis

Change in the prevalence in dental fluorosis among children aged 12-15

Unaffected 47.1%

Questionable 39.6%

Very mild 19.7%

Mild 17.2%

Moderate and severe 28.5%

Studies 1986-87 4.1%

1999-04 6.6%

1.3%

3.6%

Percent distribution of dental fluorosis among persons aged 6-49 in the United States from 1989-2004

Unaffected 60.6%

Questionable 16.5%

Very mild 16.0%

Mild 4.8%

Moderate 2.0%

Severe 0.1%

SOURCES: GDG/INCHS, National Institute of Dental Research, National Survey of Oral Health in U.S. School Children, 1986-1987 and National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999-2004

20th century. The U.S. prevalence of decay in at least one tooth among teens has declined from about 90 percent to 60 percent.

The government first began urging municipal water systems to add fluoride in the early

1950s. Since then, it has been put in toothpaste and mouthwash. It is also in a lot of bottled water and in soda. Some kids even take fluoride supplements. Now, young children may be getting too much.

"Like anything else, you can have too much of a good thing," said Dr. Howard Pollick, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco's dental school and spokesman for the American Dental Association.

One reason behind the change: About 2 out of 5 adolescents have tooth streaking or spottiness because of too much fluoride, a government study found recently. In extreme cases, teeth can be pitted by the mineral - though many cases are so mild only dentists notice it.

ON THE NET

■ CDC on fluoridation:
<http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation>



AP

Water flows from a water fountain at the Boys and Girls Club Friday, Jan. 7, 2011 in Concord, N.H.

fluoride can increase the risk of brittle bones, fractures and crippling bone abnormalities.

Critics of fluoridated water seized on the proposed change Friday to renew their attacks on it - a battle that dates back to at least the Cold War 1950s, when it was denounced by some as a step toward Communism. Many activists nowadays don't think fluoride is essential, and they praised the government's new steps.

"Anybody who was anti-fluoride was considered crazy," said Deborah Catrow, who

successfully fought a ballot proposal in 2005 that would have added fluoride to drinking water in Springfield, Ohio. "It's amazing that people have been so convinced that this is an OK thing to do."

Dental and medical groups applauded the announcement.

"This change is necessary because Americans have access to more sources of fluoride than they did when water fluoridation was first introduced," Dr. O. Marion Burton, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, said in a statement.

Personal Trainer

Exercising with a step

Step aerobics offer a good cardiovascular workout, but doing them carelessly can cause overuse injuries of your knees.

Before beginning, make sure your platform

- Is sitting flat on dry, level floor
- Will not slide or crush
- Is correct height for your fitness level

For beginner
4 to 6 in. (10 to 15 cm)

As you improve
Gradually raise step - but never so high that knee bends more than 90 degrees

Good alignment prevents injuries

Neck straight, relaxed

Shoulders pulled back

Chest raised

Back straight, not arched

Pelvis rolled under

Knees relaxed, not locked

Good technique

- Lean forward from ankles when stepping onto platform
- Whole foot on platform, no part over edge
- Step down near platform, with heels touching floor

Exceptions: Only ball of foot touches floor during lunges, other rapid "repeater" movements

- Watch platform constantly
- Step gently without pounding the platform

Safety first

Avoid hand weights
Greatly increase risk of injury, provide no benefit

To prevent overuse injury: Alternate step exercise with aerobics, swimming or other cardiovascular workouts

Are my young children getting too much fluoride?

By STEPHANIE NANO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Could your youngster be getting too much fluoride? U.S. health officials think some young kids might be. They want to change the recommended levels of fluoride in drinking water, primarily to prevent a condition called fluorosis.

Some questions and answers:

Q: What is fluorosis?

A: It's a dental condition that can result from consuming too much of the mineral fluoride. It mostly results in tiny white flecks or streaks on teeth. In extreme cases, it causes discoloration and pitting of the tooth enamel.

Q: Who can get it?

A: Only children under 8. That's when permanent teeth are developing under the gums. Once those teeth emerge, the enamel is no longer susceptible to fluorosis.

Q: Is it serious?

A: In most cases, no. The majority of cases are mild, and barely noticeable. But it has become more common. An estimated 41 percent of kids 12 to 15 have it. It's a cosmetic condition and can be treated with whitening or other procedures.

Q: How do you get too much fluoride?

A: Water, soft drinks and juices are the main source of fluoride in the United States, according to health officials. Some water supplies contain natural fluoride; it's added to the drinking water in many communities to prevent tooth decay. Other sources are toothpaste, mouthwashes, gels and supplements.

Q: Are there ways to prevent fluorosis?

A: Read the toothpaste label and limit the amount of toothpaste used by kids under 6. They should only use a pea-sized amount. Watch them brush and make sure they spit out the toothpaste - not swallow it.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends consulting a dentist before using fluoride toothpaste for a child younger than 2.

Check the fluoride level in your water supply. Public water systems are required to provide annual reports that include fluoride levels. Check their website or the CDC's My Water's Fluoride at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/MWF/Index.asp>

Health officials say if the level is above 2 milligrams per liter, consider other sources of drinking water for young children. If there isn't enough, fluoride supplements might be considered.

Life & Style

Portuguese TV star slain, castrated at NYC hotel

NEW YORK (AP)—A celebrity Portuguese television journalist was found castrated and bludgeoned to death in a New York City hotel, and his companion, a male model who had recently been a contestant on a Portuguese reality TV show, was in police custody Saturday.

The journalist, 65-year-old Carlos Castro, had arrived in the U.S. in late December in the company of his young boyfriend, the model Renato Seabra, to see some Broadway shows and spend New Year's Eve in Times Square, according to a family friend.

There had been some friction between the two men toward the end of the trip, but nothing to suggest that anything horrible was about to happen, said the friend, Luis Pires, the editor of the Portuguese language newspaper Luso-Americano.

"I think that they were a little bit upset with each other, for jealousy reasons," Pires told The Associated Press.

Paris Vogue names Alt as editor-in-chief

PARIS (AP)—Paris Vogue said Friday its next editor-in-chief will be Emmanuelle Alt, its longtime fashion director whose influential, rock-steeped style has made her one of the best-known figures in French fashion.

The French fashion monthly has been looking to fill the post after its celebrated top editor for the last decade, Carine Roitfeld, announced last month that she would leave the magazine.

The magazine's website said Alt will take up the new post on Feb. 1. It said she has spent nearly her whole career in fashion, working with French Elle and many women's magazines.

After Roitfeld's resignation, rumors widely circulated that Alt was among top candidates to succeed her. Under Alt, French Vogue looks likely to maintain the edgy, hard-core vibe that it had under Roitfeld's helm.

Under Roitfeld, the French Vogue had a reputation for being much edgier than its more commercially minded U.S. counterpart and replete with nudes and sometimes sex-seeped or disturbing spreads.

"Vogue Paris is doing very well and I wanted to confide the editor-in-chief job to someone who will be able to ensure continuity while bringing in a new touch," said Xavier Rometet, the president of Conde Nast France, in the online statement.

Alt, a stylist at the magazine, has served as Vogue's fashion editor since 2000.

The couple saw the musical "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark" and took in the movie "The Black Swan." But when it was time to meet Pires' daughter for dinner Friday night, Seabra suddenly emerged in the lobby of the InterContinental New York Times Square hotel acting strangely, Pires said.

"He told my daughter, 'Carlos will never leave the hotel again,'" Pires said.

He said his daughter, distraught, fetched a hotel manager. Security guards opened the door to the room and found the body at about 7 p.m.

By then, Seabra had left the hotel but was detained by police hours later after he sought care at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital, not far from the hotel. He was being evaluated Saturday at Bellevue Hospital Center, across town. No charges had been filed against Seabra as of Saturday afternoon, the New York Police Department said.

Police said the victim suffered serious head trauma. The medical examiner's office will determine the cause of death.

Seabra was a contestant last year on a Portuguese TV show called "A Procura Do Sonho," or "Pursuit of a Dream," which hunts for modeling talent.

He didn't win the show but did get a modeling contract with an agency founded by fashion designer Fatima Lopes, who developed the show and was a judge on it.

Seabra had always been interested in fashion, he told the Independente de Cantanhede newspaper in September.

"I have entered this world, and I don't want to leave it because I see I can be successful," he said.

Castro, who also was a columnist in Portugal, was admired there for his bravery in coming out as a gay man and "revealing the feminine side of his personality," said Rui Pedro Tendingha, a film critic who knew Castro.

He was a high-profile public figure as a TV personality, Tendingha said.

"The way he died is causing a big commotion in Portugal," he said.

The organizer of Lisbon

Fashion Week, Eduarda Abbondanza, said she knew Castro from his coverage of Fashion Week. Abbondanza said that when she fell seriously ill, Castro "was always there for me, calling me every time, checking up on me."

On a trip to Rome, Castro even bought Abbondanza a rosary that the pope had blessed. Abbondanza said that when she heard about Castro's death, she took the rosary to a church to pray.

"I only wish I could have helped him the way he helped me," Abbondanza said. "He had a huge heart. Only a human being with a heart like that could have done what he did for me."

Designer Ana Salazar, considered a fashion pioneer in Portugal, recalled Castro's role as one of the country's first social columnists.

"I was both in his best- and worst-dressed lists in the '80s," she said.

She said she was shocked by his death.

"It's like something out of a horror movie," she added.



AP

In this Aug. 27 2010 picture, Carlos Castro poses for the camera in Lisbon.

A guest at the InterContinental, Suzanne Divilly, 40, told the Daily News she heard the two men arguing in their room during the day Friday.

"There was a lot of noise, talking," she said. "You could hear them arguing in the corridor and even in our room."

Pires described Castro as having "kind of a Liberace style. Eccentric, but very well-known." He said he had been on Portuguese TV since he was

a teenager, had written several books and was friends with the former president of Portugal, Mario Soares.

The young model and older journalist had been dating each other for a few months, he said.

"My wife and my daughter were with him for the past three or four days," Pires said. "My wife told me that he was a very nice kid. Very polite. I think this must have been a crime of the heart."

"This was a 21-year-old kid, looking for fame. He (Carlos) probably saw him watching girls, or something."

The death is the second recent slaying in an upscale New York City hotel room.

Swimsuit designer Sylvie Cachay, 33, was found strangled and drowned in a bathtub at the trendy Soho House hotel on Dec. 9. Her boyfriend Nicholas Brooks has pleaded not guilty in her death.

Brooks, the 24-year-old son of "You Light Up My Life" writer and Oscar winner Joseph Brooks, has been held without bail since his arrest.

Mark Twain remains censored, and uncensored

BY HILLEL ITALIE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP)—Mark Twain was the kind of man who might tell an off-color joke, then grievously apologize, who wrote stories and essays he knew would offend and kept others private for the same reason.

A century after his death, Mark Twain remains censored, and uncensored.

The author and humorist worried enough about what he could say in public to withhold anti-religion essays and to forbid his autobiography from being published until 100 years after his death. The first of three planned volumes of the unexpurgated version, released in 2010 and including harsh words for American business and military actions, became a surprise best-seller that has sold hundreds of thousands of copies.

But Twain also believed in getting out the truth. "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" angered respectable people when it came out and still stirs a fuss 126 years later. Twain's most famous novel has been paired with "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" in a volume to be published next month by NewSouth Books that replaces the "N-word" — an offensive but often-used expression in the 1880s — with "slave."

"He was profoundly a Victorian gentleman, or tried to be," says Twain biographer Ron Powers. "It mattered to him if his wife approved of what he



AP

In this undated photo, author Mark Twain, born Samuel Clemens, is shown.

wrote and he was eager to please the public. But there were categories, like race, before which he was intrepid. In San Francisco before the Civil War, he was run out of town because he was criticizing the police for beating up Chinese people."

"He walked a line where you could fall off on either side, to be much too conservative or by going so far that what you think is funny is not funny," says Robert H. Hirst, general editor of the Mark Twain Project at the University of California at

Berkeley, where the autobiography was edited, then released by the University of California Press.

"He said early on that the only criticism he's interested in is that of the great general public. He's aiming at this big audience."

"Huckleberry Finn" comes as close as any book to the elusive status of "The Great American Novel." But its frank narrative about manners, race and rebellion in pre-Civil War time makes it an uncomfortable

classic. When first published, "Huckleberry Finn" was criticized for advocating bad behavior, for being a "coarse book not likely to set a good example for the young," says Justin Kaplan, author of a Pulitzer Prize-winning Twain biography.

Over the years, as values changed, so did the objections. The N-word led to the book's being removed from class readings lists. Some of the novel's closing scenes, when Huck and Tom delay freeing the slave Jim and place rats and snakes in his shed, have baffled historians as cruel and gratuitous.

"Some people feel this is Mark Twain's satire on reconstruction and how difficult life was after the Civil War," Powers says. "No one is really sure. It may slip back into minstrelsy. I don't know," he said, referring to the offensive shows that offered ethnic stereotypes in blackface.

Altered literary works have been around a long time, especially during the 19th century, when Victorian standards led to sanitized Shakespeare. For decades, the Loeb Classical Library published watered-down versions of Greek and Roman texts, only to reverse itself after the 1960s and put back in the dirty words of Aristophanes and others. In the late 1990s, a new edition of Aesop's Fables showed a far bawdier side than simple tales such as the Tortoise and the Hare.

"Huckleberry Finn" has long been out of copyright and sub-

ject to the wishes of anyone who cares to release it. The standard text for "Huckleberry Finn" is available through numerous publishers, but other versions are around. An edition without the N-word for grade schoolers, "retold from the original," is part of Sterling's Classic Starts Series, which includes books by Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson and Jonathan Swift.

"The books were abridged in a number of ways to make them appropriate for a third- and fourth-grade reader — length, sentence structure, difficult vocabulary and issues that might be too sensitive or confusing for a young reader," says Frances Gilbert, vice president and publisher of Sterling Children's Books.

An edited "Huckleberry Finn," issued through Signet Classics, restores a chapter about rafting from the original manuscript and condenses other scenes. John Wallace, a teacher at the Mark Twain Intermediate School in northern Virginia, published a version of "Huck Finn" about 20 years ago that used "slave" rather than the N-word.

Scholars have objected strongly to the edition of "Mark Twain's Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn" from NewSouth, although the controversy so far has resulted in few advanced sales; the book ranked No. 50,999 on Amazon.com as of Friday afternoon. Twain biographer Kaplan said he was "bitterly amused" by the new text. Powers calls the changes an "abomination" and a disservice to education.

Film critics group: 'Social Network' is 2010 pick

NEW YORK (AP)—The National Society of Film Critics on Saturday selected "The Social Network" as the best picture of 2010.

The fictional look at the creation of Facebook dominated at the society's annual awards, which were voted on by 46 prominent movie critics gathered at a Manhattan restaurant.

Jesse Eisenberg was named best actor for his role as Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of the social networking website. David Fincher won for best director and Aaron Sorkin for best screenplay.

The critics reached overseas for the best actress honor, naming Italian star Giovanna Mezzogiorno for her role in "Vincere." The film follows the rise to power of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, with him abandoning his wife and child along the way.

Supporting actor awards went to Geoffrey Rush for "The King's Speech" and Olivia Williams for "The Ghost Writer."

The society, founded in 1966, is composed of 61 film critics from across the country, including Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times, the Los Angeles Times' Kenneth Turan, The Wall Street Journal's Joe Morgenstern and David Denby of The New Yorker.

While these critics' choices



Jesse Eisenberg, left, and Joseph Mazzello in Columbia Pictures' "The Social Network."

MERRICK MORTON/MCT

rarely reflect top honors at the Academy Awards, the New York-based society helps draw attention to new films in advance of the Oscars, staged in late February by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

On Saturday, society members issued a statement calling for a re-

examination of the movie rating system set by the Motion Picture Association of America.

The critics praised a decision to change the NC-17 rating for "Blue Valentine" to an R, but they questioned others. They singled out "The King's Speech," a drama about King

George VI's attempt to overcome his speech impediment, which was rated R for "language"—moments when he's told to swear to ease his stammer.

"It's clear the board has become an agency of de facto censorship," read the statement from the critics, who

suggested a revision of the current system.

The society also condemned Iran's recent sentencing of directors Jafar Panahi and Mohammad Rasoulof to six years in prison. Both were banned from filmmaking for 20 years for "colluding in gatherings and making propaganda against the regime."

The critics urged the Iranian

government to release the directors, saying their "work can only further the advancement of such values as justice, compassion, tolerance, and human dignity."

Among foreign language films, "Carlos"—French director Olivier Assayas's 5 1/2-hour-look at the life of the global terrorist dubbed "Carlos the Jackal"—was voted best.

Murder trial of Amanda Knox featured in TV movie

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—The murder trial of American college student Amanda Knox is recreated in a television movie that had the actors debating her innocence or guilt.

"It's one of those really riveting stories where you just don't know," Hayden Panettiere, who plays Knox, told television writers on Friday. "I can't say I have an opinion. That's why the story is so interesting. I don't know that we'll ever really know."

"Amanda Knox: Murder on Trial in Italy" airs Feb. 21 on Lifetime.

The movie focuses on the trial of Knox, who was convicted of sexually assaulting and murdering her British roommate in the rented house they shared in the university town of Perugia, where both were studying.

Nicknamed "Foxy Knoxy" by her Italian prosecutor and the media, Knox was sentenced to 26 years in prison, a verdict she is appealing. The co-defendant in the appeals trial is her ex-boyfriend, Raffaele Sollecito, an Italian who was convicted of the same charges and sentenced to 25 years. Both deny any wrongdoing.

"Our story tells factually what happened up to the point of her arrest," executive producer Trevor Walton said. "We feel we've done this very responsibly and should have no effect on any ongoing trial."

The movie was filmed last year in Rome and Perugia. Producers didn't talk to any of the families, and instead worked from courtroom docu-

ments, including a 400-page report written by the judge in the case, and media reports.

"We didn't want to be biased in any way," Walton said. "We wanted to tell a drama. To go to the Knox family and not the Kercher family didn't make any sense."

Oscar winner Marcia Gay Harden, who plays Knox's mother Edda Mellas, said Knox's innocence or guilt was a daily topic among the cast.

"I personally found an opportunity playing her mom to find reasons to question that she wasn't guilty, to believe fiercely in her," Harden said. "It was very difficult not to stand behind a position as the character."

Harden plowed through the judge's document, which she said contains specific details about DNA and both sides' presentations.

"In the report, I found there to be conjecture," she said.

Panettiere focused on staying true to who she believes Knox was before the trial.

"This wasn't a dark, angry girl," she said. "She was a young girl with dreams and aspirations. I don't think guilty or innocent takes away from that."

Following the movie, Lifetime will air an hour-long documentary "Beyond the Headlines: Amanda Knox" that features interviews with Knox's mother, father, friends, investigators and prosecutors discussing the legal evidence and allegations.

Panettiere's credits include the TV show "Heroes," and the movie "I Love You, Beth Cooper."

International box office continued to grow in 2010

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The final box office numbers from foreign theaters are in and while domestic business was down last year, the international movie marketplace continued its pattern of persistent growth, collecting \$17.6 billion in revenue for 2010, nearly two billion more than in 2009.

Overseas box office accounted for 62 percent of the worldwide 2010 total of \$28.2 billion, according to the global media measurement company Rentrak Corp., demonstrating the vitality, relevance and essential nature of the international marketplace.

Of course, it's the movies themselves that drive audiences

into theaters around the world and no film did that more effectively than "Avatar." The film accounted for 7.4 percent of the international marketplace and in the process, became the highest grossing movie of all-time.

Disney's "Alice In Wonderland" and "Toy Story 3" round out the international top 3, generating a combined 7.24 percent of the international take and illustrating, along with "Avatar," the strong global appetite for 3-D films.

The top ten films released in 2010 in North America were also favorites with audiences abroad: On a film-by-film ba-

sis, 66 percent on average of their total worldwide gross was derived from the international arena, with notably half of these films being part of established franchises.

The year-end statistics clearly illustrate the international theatrical marketplace is the key to the success of the worldwide movie economy and is showing no signs of slowing down in the coming decade.

Here are the top 10 movies at international theaters in 2010 and their total overseas receipts for the year, as compiled Friday by Rentrak Corp. and provided by Hollywood.com:

1. "Avatar," \$1,289,376,667.
2. "Alice In Wonderland," \$661,333,466.
3. "Toy Story 3," \$601,723,026.
4. "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Part 1," \$575,062,242.
5. "Inception," \$497,357,826.
6. "Shrek Forever After," \$438,227,922.
7. "Twilight Saga: Eclipse," \$353,323,166.
8. "Clash Of The Titans," \$300,179,878.
9. "Iron Man 2," \$283,477,327.
10. "Despicable Me," \$268,350,812.

Producers pitching Kennedy project elsewhere

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—After the History channel said it would not air a controversial miniseries on the Kennedy family, producers were already seeking another television home.

The Showtime pay cable network has been approached to air the eight-part series, a spokesman said on Saturday. Eight years ago, Showtime aired a movie about President Reagan that CBS had made but decided not to broadcast when it faced pressure from some of that former president's family.

Showtime won't make a decision about the Kennedy miniseries until its executives have a chance to see it, spokesman Richard Licata said.

The multi-million dollar

miniseries, which stars Greg Kinnear and Katie Holmes as John and Jackie Kennedy, was History's most expensive project ever. But the network issued a statement late Friday saying that after watching the finished product, "we have concluded this dramatic interpretation is not a fit for the History brand."

Producers have sold the rights to air the series in other countries, including Canada. The producers, Muse Entertainment and Asylum, said in a statement they were confident U.S. television viewers would have a chance to see the series.

A concerted effort was made to quash the series. Liberal filmmaker Robert Greenwald collected 50,000 petitions urg-

ing History not to air it, and he produced a short film condemning the project on a website, stopkennedysmears.com. He had been given an early script, which included one scene where President Kennedy tells his brother Robert about his need to have sex with other women.

Former Kennedy aide Theodore Sorensen also harshly condemned the film, saying scenes in the script where he was depicted didn't actually occur.

History also likely felt corporate pressure. The network is owned by the A&E Television Networks, which itself is owned jointly by NBC Universal, the Walt Disney Co. and the Hearst Corp.

A top Disney executive, Disney-ABC Media Networks co-chairwoman Anne Sweeney, is also on the board of directors for the Special Olympics, the organization started by the late Eunice Kennedy Shriver, President Kennedy's sister.

Hyperion, a Disney-owned publisher, plans in September to release a book and audiotapes based on interviews that Jackie Kennedy gave to historian and family friend Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in 1964. They had been sealed since then but will be released on the OK of daughter Caroline Kennedy, who is scheduled to edit the project and write an introduction. It's the 50th anniversary of the first year of Kennedy's presidency.



Hayden Panettiere, left, and Marcia Gay Harden, co-stars of the Lifetime Television movie "The Amanda Knox Story," take part in a panel discussion during the A&E Networks Television Critics Association winter press tour in Pasadena, Calif., Friday, Jan. 7, 2011.

AP

Anna Nicole Smith doctor subpoenaed by medical board

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anna Nicole Smith's primary doctor, who was acquitted in the late model's high-profile drug prescription case, has been subpoenaed in a separate investigation, his attorney said Friday.

"It's outrageous," said Ellyn Garafalo, who represents Dr. Sandeep Kapoor. "This shows that this is a vendetta."

She said Kapoor was standing outside the courtroom where a judge dismissed most charges against Kapoor's co-defendants on Thursday when he was handed a subpoena by a process server representing the California Medical Board.

Garafalo said the board is investigating cases unrelated to the Smith case.

She said Kapoor has treated many severely ill patients and has written numerous prescriptions for them.

Kapoor was tried with Howard K. Stern and psychiatrist Dr. Kristine Eroshevich on charges of excessively prescribing opiates and sedatives for the former Playboy model. A jury acquitted him of all charges.

After a long and costly trial prosecution, Superior Court Judge Robert Perry threw out conspiracy convictions against Stern and Eroshevich, allowing one charge against her to remain but reducing it to a misdemeanor.

Garafalo said she has learned that official costs of the prosecution are close to \$4 million, that the defendants each spent up to \$1 million on their defenses and that their reputations were severely damaged. Proceedings before the medical board could increase legal costs.

Both Kapoor and Eroshevich face potential problems with the medical board.

A spokesman for the medical board did not respond to an e-mail from The Associated Press.

Kapoor came to the hearing in support of the others, he said, and because he wanted to experience closure of the case. He said he had returned to a busy practice and his patients had remained loyal to him.

'Jersey Shore' premiere highest rated for MTV

LOS ANGELES (AP)—More than 8 million viewers watched Snooki and company return to "Jersey Shore."

The third season premiere of the MTV reality TV series was the most watched series telecast in the cable network's history, MTV announced Friday. The network said 8.45 million total viewers tuned in to the show, which chronicles the carryings-on of a group of hard-partying, 20- and 30-somethings at a beach house on the Seaside Heights, N.J., boardwalk.

The second season was set in Miami.

MTV announced last month that it signed a deal with Paul "DJ Pauly D" DelVecchio to star in his own spin-off series.

An actor with ties to another prominent New Jersey series, James Gandolfini of "The Sopranos," flashed a look of distaste when he was asked at a news conference in Pasadena whether he watched "Jersey Shore."



From left, cast members Ronnie Ortiz-Magro, Sammi Giancola, Paul DelVecchio, Jenni Farley, Nicole Polizzi, and Vinny Guadagnino, from the television show "Jersey Shore", pose for a portrait in Los Angeles on Sept. 13, 2010.

Eva Longoria's Vegas club files for bankruptcy

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A Las Vegas nightclub owned by "Desperate Housewives" actress Eva Longoria has filed for bankruptcy, saying it owes nearly \$5.7 million.

Lawyers for Beso LLC said in a federal Chapter 11 filing on Thursday that they project losing more than \$76,000 per month at the CityCenter restaurant and nightspot. It is seeking bankruptcy in order to keep operating.

Beso owes nearly \$1.8 million to CityCenter for its lease at the Crystals mall inside the

resort complex that opened in December 2009, lawyers said in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court filing in Las Vegas.

CityCenter is owned jointly by casino operator MGM Resorts International and Dubai World, the investment arm of the Persian Gulf state.

Longoria owns nearly one-third of Beso but is also listed as an unsecured creditor. Lawyers said she gave a cash loan of just over \$1 million and paid \$375,000 in legal fees for the venture.

Longoria's publicists in Los

Angeles said that the filing was the last step in dealing with a dispute with two former partners.

Longoria said in the statement e-mailed to The Associated Press that the new year and reorganization presented a good opportunity to begin anew.

"I look forward to a more proactive, hands-on approach in the coming years with my Las Vegas businesses," she said.

The statement said Longoria plans to travel to Las Vegas next week to take charge of Beso's plans for moving forward.

'Spartacus' producer: Prequel won't disappoint

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—A producer for Starz's "Spartacus" series says fans who enjoy the show's graphic blood and guts won't be disappointed when it returns.

Producer Steven DeKnight said Friday that "there are some deaths that are so incredible you just have to rewind and watch again because you can't believe what you just saw."

"Spartacus: Gods of the Arena" debuts on Jan. 21. It is designed as a six-episode "prequel" to the show's first season, in part to write around the inability of actor Andy Whitfield to perform.

Whitfield, who played Spartacus, was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma and cannot return. Starz says his



In this TV publicity image released by Starz, Andy Whitfield portrays Spartacus in the Starz original series, "Spartacus."

character would be recast.

Starz says the gladiator series will move forward filming another season, although it hasn't been determined when that

would air.

The series attracted attention when it debuted last year for its graphic scenes of violence and sexuality.

Mom is pressured to cut off any contact with 'grandson'

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My son, "Jarod," was in a relationship with "Gayle," who has a small son, "Danny." My husband and I took Danny into our hearts as our grandson. Danny formed a bond with Jarod's other two children and they consider him a brother. Although Jarod's relationship with Gayle didn't last, we continue to maintain close ties with Danny.

Jarod's new girlfriend, "Liz," also has a small son. Liz has asked me to end my relationship with Danny because she considers it a "threat" to her and her son.

I feel Liz is asking too much. How can I just stop loving Danny? Why is she asking me to do this? When I asked Liz if she were to break up with Jarod, would that mean I could never again speak to her son, she said, "Yes!"

I don't think relationships should be disposable, but I can see that refusing Liz's request will cause a rift. She refuses to visit our home as long as we continue to treat Danny as our grandson. I need your advice because my heart is breaking.

EMOTIONALLY INVESTED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR EMOTIONALLY INVESTED: What Liz is saying is not a "request," it's blackmail. It appears your son is involved with an insecure and manipulative woman who does not grasp that there is room in your heart for Jarod's children, Danny and her son, too.

I sincerely hope you won't give in, and that you will talk to your son and explain to him that you would like to accept Liz and her son, but if she persists in the stance she's taking, you will miss her. You have described someone who has a lot of growing up to do, and I hope your son recognizes it before he makes a mistake he may regret.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My neighbor's children were walking home from school last month when I saw that they had dropped some papers. When I returned them to the kids, I noticed they were behind on their school lunch bill. The oldest child mentioned, "I hope Mom can pay or we'll have to eat cheese sandwiches." I was beyond angry! Their father is doing his second tour in Afghanistan, and their mother is doing her best to make ends meet.

I took my fury to the school and discovered the kids didn't qualify for free lunches because their parents were just a couple of dollars over the limit. What a disgraceful way to treat the family of a soldier! I had money set aside for Christmas and decided to pay for those children's lunches for the rest of the year. It wasn't cheap—\$2 per lunch for three kids—but it was worth it.

Abby, please let your readers know that if anyone can afford even a few dollars, to inquire at their local school if there is a soldier's child -- or any child -- who needs a free lunch. Our soldiers shouldn't have to worry about their kids going hungry in school.

P.S. My neighbors do not know about my donation.

LENDING A HAND IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR LENDING A HAND: You are an angel. One would think that children of active members of the military would get a better break, but if your letter is any indication, it appears that isn't the case.

Readers, if you have a few dollars to spare, consider contacting your local school(s) and asking if they have a program to accommodate children from families whose income may be "just over the line." Privacy rules may prevent the identities of the children from being disclosed, but the money could be put into a fund for this purpose.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby—Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Rap superstar Eminem eyeing possible film role

DETROIT (AP)—Eminem is considering a return to the big screen. The Hollywood Reporter says in a story published Friday that the rapper is set to star in a crime thriller entitled "Random Acts of Violence." Eminem's publicist, Dennis Dennehy confirms to The Associated Press the Grammy- and Oscar-winning performer could end up in the movie but that "nothing is set in stone." In a statement sent to the AP, Dennehy says Eminem's producing team has been developing the project "for some time" and "everyone involved hopes that it comes to fruition and the film goes into production." Dennehy says there's no firm start date. Eminem hasn't starred in a film since 2002's "8 Mile." His latest record, "Recovery," was the top-seller for 2010.

Ivan Reitman says 'Ghostbusters 3' script is ready

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Power up that Proton Pack: "Ghostbusters 3" is closer to becoming a reality. Ivan Reitman, who directed and pro-

duced the first two "Ghostbusters" movies, says "a very good script" for the third installment in the comic ghost-hunting tale has been sent to star Bill Murray. Reitman said Friday that "nothing you've read on the Internet is accurate" and that Murray hasn't yet read the "Ghostbusters 3" script. But the filmmaker is confident about its content, saying "it's good enough to do, to take the risk of doing again." Reitman's latest project is the romantic comedy "No Strings Attached," starring Natalie Portman and Ashton Kutcher. It opens Jan. 21.

Emeril Lagasse to cook up new show on Hallmark

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Emeril Lagasse will be heating up his pots and pans for a new cooking show on Hallmark Channel. The cable network said Friday the show will air daily starting late this year as part of its daytime programming block. It will be produced by Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. Lagasse has hosted shows on Food Network and regularly appears on cooking segments for "Good Morning America."

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Seahawks stun Saints in NFL playoffs



SEATTLE (AP)—In a scene straight out of college, Pete Carroll stood in the middle of a pile on the midfield logo, jumping up and down with his players celebrating in unison.

The labels stuck on the seven-win Seattle Seahawks—jokes, light-weights, laughingstocks—no longer fit Saturday.

That's when Carroll's rowdy crew sent the defending Super Bowl champions packing, pulling one of the most unlikely upsets in playoff history, a 41-36 win over the New Orleans Saints.

Who Dat moving on in the NFC playoffs? It's the Seahawks.

"It didn't matter what I said to them, or what was said outside, and all of the story lines and all that, they just did not buy it," Carroll said. "Where that came from? If I knew that, we'd have something special here. It came out of an attitude and it came out of a faith in one another."

Matt Hasselbeck threw four touchdown passes and Marshawn Lynch scored on an electrifying 67-yard run with 3:22 left to clinch the first playoff victory by a losing team.

The Seahawks (8-9) held a 34-20 early in the fourth quarter before Drew Brees looked ready to lead the Saints (11-6) on one of their patented comebacks. But Lynch broke a half-dozen tackles for his TD and a few anxious minutes later, the party was on at Qwest Field, the NFL's loudest stadium.

Seattle, the first division winner with a losing record, will play next weekend, either at top-seeded Atlanta or No. 2 Chicago.

It's a trip no one outside Seattle's locker room expected to happen.

"I assume people are going to say it was more about what the Saints didn't do and not what we did, or that the Saints lost the game, not us winning it," Seattle wide receiver Mike Williams said. "Whatever is said, it doesn't matter. What matters is the direction our team is in and the focus the guys have in the locker room."

Seattle didn't just beat the defending champions. They outgunned and outscored Brees, energizing a crowd that just a week wasn't sure who the quarterback should be.

Last Sunday, Hasselbeck watched as backup Charlie Whitehurst led the Seahawks to the NFC West title with a win over St. Louis. Hasselbeck was only cleared to go as the starter Thursday and even had fluid drained from his hip.

Hasselbeck rallied Seattle from 10-0 and 17-7 deficits, putting together a 24-3 run in the second and third quarters as the Seahawks surged ahead.

Hasselbeck threw a pair of touchdowns to tight end John Carlson—who had one TD during the regular season. He found Brandon Stokley on a 45-yard TD late in the second quarter, then found Williams for 38 yards on the first drive of the second half to give Seattle a 31-20 lead.

Hasselbeck threw for 272 yards and the four TDs set a playoff career high. It was quite a show by Hasselbeck, whose contract expires after the season. He walked off the field to a rousing ovation with his son propped on his shoulders.

"It wasn't just one thing, it felt like



Seattle Seahawks' Matt Hasselbeck, far left, celebrates after Marshawn Lynch, center, scored a touchdown in the second half of an NFL NFC wild card playoff football game against the New Orleans Saints, Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011, in Seattle.

everyone did a little something to help us get the win," Hasselbeck said. "It was just an awesome feeling."

But for all Hasselbeck did, the lasting image of this stunner will be Lynch's run that clinched the victory.

Lynch took a second-down carry with less than four minutes to go and then the highlights began. Eight different Saints' got their hands on Lynch as he shed six tackles. Lynch added a massive stiff arm that sent cornerback Tracy Porter to the turf and dived backward into the end zone on the longest scoring run of his career.

Hasselbeck said if that play gets 4 yards "you're patting yourself on the back." Lynch finished with 131 yards on 19 carries, the first Seattle back to top 100 yards this season.

"That was the most unbelievable, unrealistic play I've ever seen in the history of football," Seattle linebacker Aaron Curry said. "It was just unreal. It seems just like a routine football play, then he takes it to another level."

Hasselbeck, Lynch and a strong performance by Seattle's offense extended the Saints franchise misery to 0-4 in

road playoff games.

The Saints were considered the second-best team in the conference behind the NFC South-winning Falcons. Even though they lost to Tampa Bay in the season finale a week ago and were without running backs Pierre Thomas and Chris Ivory, safety Malcolm Jenkins and linebacker Danny Clark, the Saints were favored by 10 points to advance.

Now they go home.

"It's not fun," Saints cornerback Jabari Greer said.

Brees, who completed a playoff-record 39 passes in 60 attempts for 404 yards and two TDs, still couldn't match Hasselbeck and the Seahawks offense. Brees led one final drive, hitting Devery Henderson on a 6-yard touchdown with 1:30 left to get within 41-36.

But DeShawn Wynn was stopped on the 2-point conversion, Garrett Hartley's onside kick was recovered by Carlson and the Seahawks were left to celebrate.

"It's disappointing. It starts with us and myself and the rest of the coaches," Saints coach Sean Payton said. "I

thought they had effort but in the end, not enough to win this game. It's disappointing to get in the postseason and finish with a loss to start."

Reggie Bush finished with five carries for 12 yards, caught five passes and did not play in the fourth quarter. Bush said he was hit near where he broke his leg earlier in the season, but X-rays were negative.

Julius Jones, cut by Seattle earlier in the season, ran for two short touchdowns and finished with 120 all-purpose yards, but was "dinged" in a collision with Lofa Tatupu in the fourth quarter that left Tatupu with a concussion.

In the second half, Brees threw on 33 of the Saints' 41 plays as he tried to rally the Saints from a two-touchdown deficit. Jones' 4-yard TD run with 13:11 left pulled the Saints within 34-27, but they had to settle for Hartley's 21-yard field goal on the next drive after Henderson was tackled short on a third-down pass at the Seattle 4.

Seattle got a first down on its next drive when Hasselbeck hit Stokley for

12 yards, but Hasselbeck was sacked by Scott Shanle on second down and Seattle was forced to punt with under six minutes remaining. The 52-yard punt by Jon Ryan, plus a penalty on the return, backed the Saints to their own 6 with 5:36 left.

Brees couldn't convert on third-and-8 at his 19 and the Saints punted with 4:29 left and just one timeout. Lynch's run then gave Seattle an 11-point lead, a big enough advantage that one last Brees rally couldn't top.

"The underdog role, I think we cherished it and kind of took it to heart," Seattle's Marcus Trufant said. "Nobody gave us a chance and we just kind of shrugged our shoulder. We knew we were going to come out and play our ball."

Jets 17, Colts 16

In Indianapolis, coach Rex Ryan and New York finally got the made-for-TV ending they wanted.

The bombastic Ryan got his victory over Manning when Nick Folk made a 32-yard field goal as time expired.

All week, Ryan turned this into a coach vs. quarterback matchup, referring to his 1-5 record against Manning as Jets coach and Ravens defensive coordinator. Instead, it came down to Folk becoming a hero.

With his main tormentor out of the way, Ryan and the Jets next head to New England seeking to avenge the Patriots' 45-3 demolition job at Foxborough earlier this season.

The Colts beat the Jets for the AFC title a year ago and thought they had done so again Saturday when Adam Vinatieri made a 50-yard field goal with 53 seconds to go.

But Antonio Cromartie returned the ensuing kickoff 47 yards and Mark Sanchez needed five plays to get the Jets into position for the winner.

Manning was 18 of 26 for 225 yards and one TD, and got Vinatieri, considered the best clutch kicker in league history, in position with an eight-play, 48-yard drive in the final 2 1/2 minutes.

But he left 53 seconds on the clock for New York. After Braylon Edwards made a leaping 18-yard catch to take New York to the Colts 14, Folk's kick went right down the middle.

"Any time you lose on a last-second field goal, it certainly stings," Manning said.

Jets tailback LaDainian Tomlinson, considered washed-up by some before the season, carried 16 times for 82 yards and scored on two 1-yard runs.

"It's emotional, exciting and all those things at once," Tomlinson said. "We knew it was going to be a dogfight against a great team."

The Colts actually helped the Jets' winning drive by calling timeout with 29 seconds remaining and with the ball at the Indianapolis 32. Sanchez passed to Edwards on the next play, a high pass to the right sideline. Folk trotted on and won it.

"We've got to tip our hat to our offense. It was unbelievable," said Ryan, whose bravado made him a summer sensation in HBO's "Hard Knocks" series. "We totally dominated the second half offensively. On defense, we had to hold serve. Against Peyton, you're not going to stop him completely, but our guys played well enough to get it done and keep him out of the end zone."

Bulls cool off hot Celtics



CHICAGO (AP)—Derrick Rose scored 36 points as the Chicago Bulls cooled off the hot form of the Boston Celtics with a 90-79 win in the NBA on Saturday.

Rose set career highs for free throws made and attempted with a 15-for-19 performance from the line, driving by Rajon Rondo over and over again before usually drawing contact from one or more of Boston's big men. Rondo and Jermaine O'Neal each finished the game with five fouls and Shaquille O'Neal had four.

Carlos Boozer added 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Bulls.

Paul Pierce had 21 points to lead Boston, which had won four straight.

Magic 117, Mavericks 107

In Dallas, Orlando extended the NBA's longest active winning streak to nine games with victory over injury-depleted Dallas.

Dwight Howard had 23 points and 13 rebounds, and Jason Richardson scored 20 points for Orlando, which rallied from a 16-point, first-half deficit.

DeShawn Stevenson scored a season-high 24 points for the Mavericks, who were without top scorer Dirk Nowitzki for his career-longest seventh straight game with a knee sprain.

Thunder 109, Grizzlies 100

In Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 40 points as Oklahoma City avenged a loss at Memphis earlier this week.

Durant eclipsed 40 points for the second time in two weeks, hitting a pair of free throws and then a jumper from the left elbow after Memphis had pulled within two in the final 2 minutes.

Russell Westbrook added 22 points and 11 assists for the Thunder.

Zach Randolph had 27 points and 16 rebounds—including nine on the offensive end—for the Grizzlies.

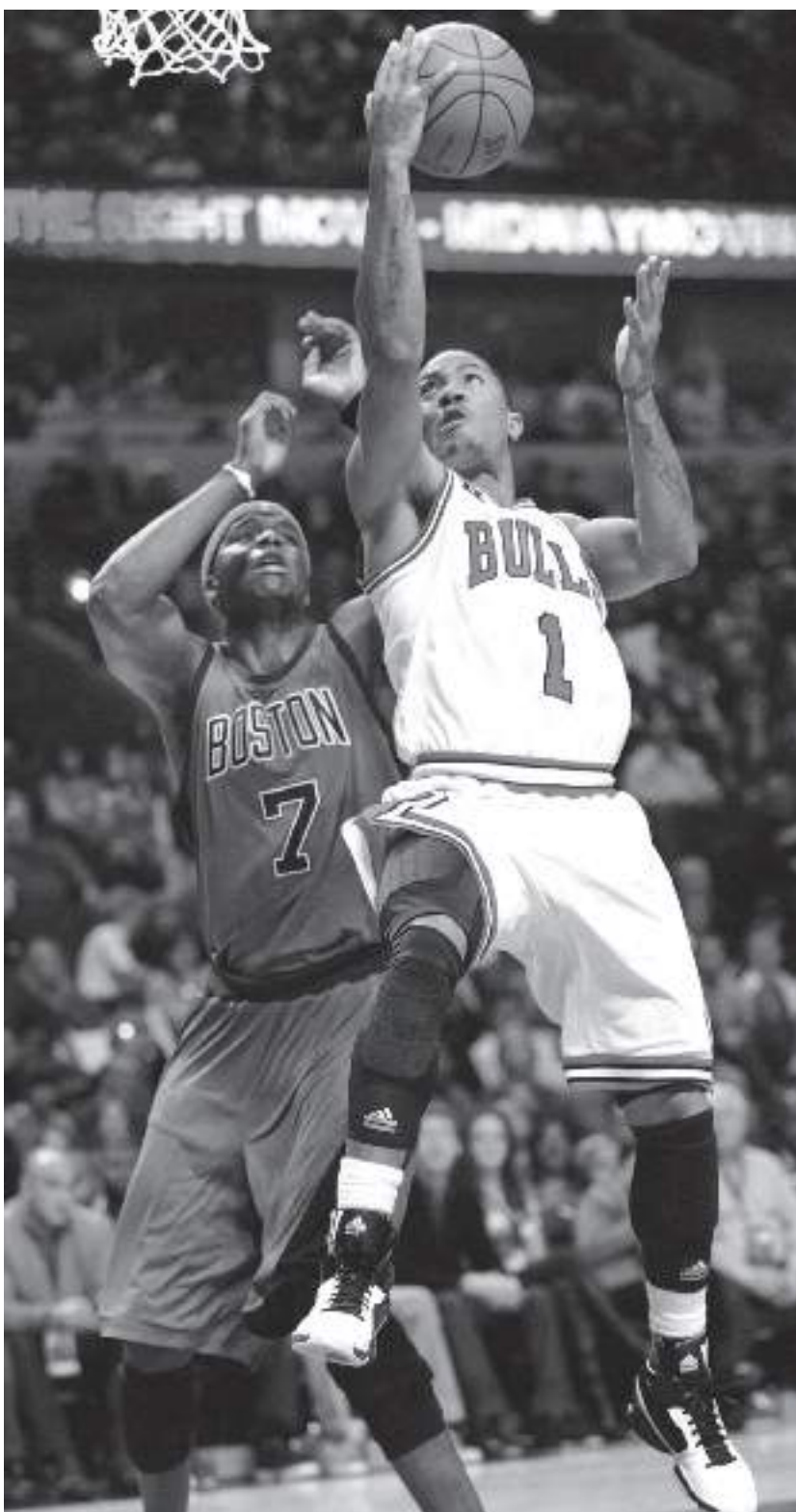
Jazz 103, Rockets 99, OT

In Houston, Paul Millsap scored 12 of his 27 points in overtime as Utah rallied from yet another double-digit deficit in a victory over slumping Houston.

Al Jefferson had 24 points and 13 rebounds for the Jazz, who have come back to win 12 times this season after trailing by at least 10 points.

Luis Scola had 24 points and 10 rebounds for the Rockets, who have lost five in a row.

Utah trailed by as many as 16 points but held Houston to 13 field goals after



Chicago Bulls' Derrick Rose right, goes up for a shot against Boston Celtics' Jermaine O'Neal in the fourth quarter during a NBA basketball game in Chicago, Saturday, Jan. 8, 2011.

halftime to close the gap.

Hawks 108, Pacers 93

In Atlanta, Josh Smith scored 14 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter to secure Atlanta's win over Indiana.

Joe Johnson added 24 points for the Hawks, who have won four straight.

Danny Granger scored 16 for the Pacers, who seemed to lose focus after

coach Jim O'Brien's technical foul in the third quarter. Indiana never led and has lost three straight.

Pistons 112, 76ers 109, OT

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Austin Daye made a tying 3-pointer with 3.5 seconds left in regulation and Detroit went on to beat Philadelphia in overtime.

Detroit trailed by three when Phila-

delphia's Lou Williams missed two free throws with 6.2 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. After a timeout, Daye caught an inbound pass in the corner and made the tying shot from long range.

The 76ers nearly rallied from a seven-point deficit in the final 20 seconds of overtime, pulling within one on 3-pointers by Evan Turner and Jodie Meeks. After Rodney Stuckey made two free throws for Detroit with 6.6 seconds left, Meeks tried an off-balance shot with two defenders on him that bounced off the rim.

Bucks 115, Nets 92

In Newark, Chris Douglas-Roberts celebrated his birthday by scoring 24 points against his former teammates to lead Milwaukee over New Jersey.

Ersan Ilyasova added a season-high

22 points and 13 rebounds as the Bucks beat the Nets for the sixth straight time.

Milwaukee, the NBA's worst shooting team at 41.3 percent from the field, shot a season-best 58.3 percent in scoring a season high in points despite having center Andrew Bogut sidelined with a viral infection.

Kris Humphries scored a season-high 22 points for New Jersey.

Bobcats 104, Wizards 89

In Charlotte, the hosts kept Washington winless on the road this season.

Stephen Jackson scored 21 points and D.J. Augustin added 20 for the Bobcats, who pulled away early in the fourth quarter to improve to 4-2 under interim coach Paul Silas.

Kirk Hinrich scored 18 points for the Wizards, who remained the NBA's lone winless team on the road at 0-18.

Cubs complete trade for Matt Garza



CHICAGO

(AP)—Matt Garza helped Tampa Bay go from the cellar of the AL East to the World Series two years ago and then led the Rays to another division title last season.

Now he's the latest Rays' star moving out, and he's joining a team that hasn't been in the World Series since 1945 or won one since 1908.

Garza, a 15-game winner last season, was traded Saturday to the Chicago Cubs in an eight-player deal that brings him from the sunshine and a roofed stadium to the chills and winds of Wrigley Field.

"I was kinda of caught off guard. Your name was out there, a numerous amount of teams," Garza said. "I let it take care of myself because I knew my job was to get ready for the season, whether it be Tampa or wherever."

Garza will be joining a rotation that includes Carlos Zambrano and Ryan Dempster. He's going from a team that captured the tough AL East last season to one that finished fifth in the NL Central.

Garza is the biggest addition for the Cubs in the offseason after they earlier signed his former Rays' teammate, first baseman Carlos Pena, and brought back reliever Kerry Wood.

"It isn't often you can acquire a 27-year-old top-of-the-rotation type of guy who has three years left before he's a free agent in any kind of trade," said Cubs general manager Jim Hendry, adding that the trade had been worked on for nearly a month.

"This was a great trade for the present and the future," Hendry added.

The Cubs did have to give up some

young prospects.

The Rays get promising right-hander Chris Archer, a 15-game winner in two minor league stops last season, and 20-year-old shortstop Hak-Ju Lee. Also going from Chicago to Tampa Bay are catcher Robinson Chirinos and outfielders Sam Fuld and Brandon Guyer.

"Simply said, we really like the deal a lot. It kind of fits in with our short-term and long-term objectives," Rays executive vice president of baseball operations Andrew Friedman said. "It's a perfect win-win trade for both sides or we wouldn't have done it."

Garza joins the Cubs along with outfielder Fernando Perez and left-hander Zachary Rosscup.

"It's just a real good old-fashioned baseball trade that often doesn't get made with the volume of people involved and for the right reasons for both organizations," Hendry said.

He added that the trade was not a reaction to division-rival Milwaukee strengthening its rotation by adding Zack Greinke and Shaun Marcum.

"We think we if we got the right starting pitcher, the right first baseman and a little more bullpen help that we could contend again and that was the only goal," Hendry said.

Garza pitched a no-hitter against Detroit last season, when he went 15-10 with a 3.91 ERA. He spent his first two major league seasons with the Twins and the last three with the Rays.

Garza was the ALCS MVP in 2008 when he won two games as the Rays advanced to the World Series. He is 42-44 with six complete games and a 3.97 ERA in 121 major league outings, 118 as a starting pitcher, with the Twins and the Rays.

Stricker, Byrd, Garrigus in the lead at Kapalua



KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP)—Robert Garrigus recovered from an atrocious start Saturday by holing a 50-foot eagle putt on the 18th hole to join Steve Stricker and Jonathan Byrd in the lead after three rounds of the Tournament of Champions.

Garrigus hit a 4-iron into a hazard to open with double bogey and followed with a bogey to quickly fall out of the lead he held after two rounds. By the end of the third, he was back where he started.

The eagle gave Garrigus a 4-under 69 and a good chance to become the first player since Tiger Woods in 2000

to win the season opener after winning the final event of the previous year.

Stricker turned an impossible lie into an unlikely birdie on the 12th hole, avoiding a loose piece of grass behind his ball in the bunker by hitting a 4-iron to five feet. It was part of a five straight birdies that carried him to an 8-under 65, a score he didn't think was possible in a strong wind that makes the Plantation Course play at its longest.

Byrd, who has been around the lead all week, was steady as usual. He nearly holed a wedge on the 16th and settled for a tap-in birdie, but his pitch to the 18th was just long enough that it trickled down a slope and rolled 50 feet away. His two-putt

par gave him a 67.

All three were at 18-under 201, three shots clear of Carl Pettersson, who had a 71.

Three Americans atop the leaderboard at least improved the odds of ending a streak at Kapalua in which international players had won the PGA season opener the past nine times.

Matt Kuchar had the lead at one point by making seven birdies in a nine-hole stretch, but he played even par over the final six holes for a 66 and wound up four shots out of the lead. U.S. Open champion Graeme McDowell shot a 68 as he continued to get used to mountain golf atop the Pacific Ocean. He was six shots behind, along with Bill Haas (69).

Garrigus looked as though he might not break par the way he started. His caddie told him to slow down his swing, and a birdie on the third hole settled him down.

"I thought getting back to under par was going to be good for me," Garrigus said. "That was a hell of a way to end the round."

Stricker began making his move with a birdie on the ninth hole, but the 12th was his shot of the tournament. He described it as "a do-or-die swing."

He had a grass divot left of his ball in the bunker, which was no problem. There was a 2-inch piece of grass behind the ball, and he called for a rules official to ask if he could move it, deep down knowing that he couldn't. What he didn't realize, however, was that he

could not touch the grass piece at any point in his swing.

From 178 yards into the wind, he hit 4-iron that he brought from the inside and picked the ball cleanly from the sand. It caught the left side of the green and settled 5 feet away.

"You hit a shot like that, you want to make the putt," he said. "That was the topper."

He kept right on going, making a super fast putt on the 13th, using his superb wedge game for easy birdie putts on the 14th and 15th, and ending with another good pitch to 3 feet on the 18th.

"I didn't think an 8-under round was out there," he said. "But as I got into a roll on the back side, I kept wanting more."

Armatech pummels AON Blood

By **WALTER SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER

Armatech poured it on in the second half to rout AON Blood, 110-90, during their 40A division game in the Master Basketball Federation of the NMI’s Memorial Cup last Thursday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The win improved Armatech’s record to 5-1 and solidified its second position in the standings. AON Blood is still looking for its first win in five tries. In the 45A play, Top 45 was awarded a win by forfeit over Brotherhood. The free victory put Top 45 alone in first place, while Brotherhood still awaits its first win in four games.

Armatech started slow, allowing Blood to take an early

16-14 lead after the first 10 minutes of action. Blood’s Frank Babauta paced his team with eight points.

Then Blood kept the pressure on and made it a two-possession advantage at half-time, 42-38. Babauta added 14 markers in the second quarter to keep Armatech at bay. Armatech’s Ferdie Tobias scored a late string of nine points for his only offensive production in the game and the timely baskets kept his team in the fight.

After the break, Armatech went on a full gear and jumped ahead, 76-64, at the end of the third quarter. Martin Moreno led the charge with 14 points in that period for Armatech.

Blood’s defense broke

down in the second half and was outscored in the third quarter, 22-38. To make matters worse, Blood’s main offensive threat, Babauta, was contained to three baskets in that period.

Blood failed to recover and remained behind by double digits in the fourth canto. Armatech saved plenty of energy for its finish and had another 30-plus point production in the fourth quarter.

Bernardo Montano came off the bench for Armatech and delivered 12 points to help secure the victory.

Babauta finished with 40 points to lead all scorers, but his team still came up 20-points short in the battle. Moreno topped five Armatech double-

game at 20-20.

Notably, at game point with Mister and Matson in front, 20-17, they elected to attempt what they called a “sky-ball” for the win. Mister faced the serving line backwards, underhanded the ball a good 35-40 feet almost straight in the air where it just made it over the net, but landed about a foot out of bounds to the side of the net. Nevertheless, Mister and Matson recovered and put away the former champs, 23-21.

Steele and Kennedy each took home PIC water passes and a free brunch coupon at Magellan, \$25 PlasticClothing.com online certificate, \$20 Shell fuel card, \$10 IT&E prepaid card and an IT&E 100 free text card.

The Top 8 finishers also received prizes; all winners received various IT&E swag. Jen Leskosek and Pedro Iguel finished tied for seventh place

seven, respectively.

Cabaltica top-scored for the Knights with 15 markers, but was limited to two points in the fourth quarter.

Kagman begins title bid
Meanwhile, action in the MISO caging continues today with defending champion Kagman High School taking on Mt. Carmel.

The Ayuyus are highly favored against the Knights as the defending champions are parading majority of the players who led the team to the varsity title last season.

Returning for Kagman are Sahj Hossain, Juan Maratita, Ichitaro Faisao, Savali Talalemotu, Kroy Ogo, Frank Met-

the former failed, giving the latter her first Queen of the Lanes title.

“There was nothing special in my game today. I just went out there like an ordinary game, threw the ball, and waited for the results. Fortunately, the results favored me,” Omechelang said.

Eight others joined the Queen of the Lanes final roll-

digit scorers with 23.

Meanwhile, MBFNMI is calling on representatives of 40A and 45A teams to attend a meeting on Wednesday at 5:30pm at the conference room of the Ada gym.

In addition, there will be two make-up games in the 40A division on Thursday with Island Apparel taking on AON Blood at 6:30pm and The House facing Ol’Aces at 8pm.

Armatech 110 – Moreno 23, Ebuén 18, Montano 18, Bello 14, Bernardo 10, Arenas 9, Tobias 9, Canedo 4, Mateo 3, Malasarte 2.

AON Blood 90 – Babauta 40, Bucalig 19, Cabrera 15, Butalid 6, Aldan 4, Morales 4, Valdez 2.

Scoring by quarters: 14-16, 38-42, 76-64, 110-90.

with Bruce Berline and Jennifer Douglas. Quinn and Saiki finished tied for fifth place with Gechig and Hallaby.

White and Peterka finished fourth and took home \$10 Truong’s gift cards, while Johnson and Matson finished in third place and won \$15 Tony Roma’s gift cards and a \$10 Shell fuel card.

“NMIVA was very helpful in providing guidance with the set up of this tournament. They showed us what we needed to do to have a successful event. Whenever we had a question, they answered us within 24 hours, which made it really easy. Plus, the help they provided with the media, newspaper, TV, and website was a big plus. Since I was setting up this tournament in my spare time, it was really great to have their support,” Steele said after co-organizing the event with Kennedy.

tao, Jason Palacios, Brandon Babauta, and Michael Manglona. Completing coach Fa’aea Talalemoto’s roster are Mart Sablan, Tristan Joseph, Chris Santos, Erbert Santiago, and Eugenio Delos Reyes.

The Kagman-MCS tiff will be played at 4:30pm and will be followed by another varsity game between GCA and MHS 10 minutes after the first match.

GCA 55 – Jeon 23, Salas 8, Hong 7, Chargualaf 6, Reyes 4, Kim 3, Libut 3.

MCS 44 – Cabaltica 15, Griffin 5, Kim 5, Baka 4, Yoon 4, Gagarin 3, Saludez 2, Sanchez 1, Bautista 1.

Scoring by quarters: 2-10, 20-23, 39-31, 55-44.

off, but failed to advance to the next round. Mel Regis finished fifth in the qualifier with her 1,242 pinfalls, followed by Lala Taitano (1,220), Gigi Zapanta (1,194), Carol McKenzie (1,191), Linda Yarobwemal (1,151), Diane Chong (1,108), Myrna Santos (1,104), and Elena Soll (1,062).

FITIAL

From Page 28

condition possible,” Fitial said in an interview last Saturday.

The Marianas Elite frontman will be pitted against current PXC heavyweight champ Roque Martinez of Spike 22.

“Well, I know how bad I want it, I know how much work I’ve been putting into my training and I hope Martinez has been training hard, too because I’m going to bring it on January 21,” the CNMI MMA fighter added.

Fitial is currently undergoing resistance water training methods, swimming, running, and refining his wrestling skills on the mat. Although aware of Martinez’s size and fighting style, Fitial is primarily focused on getting himself prepared to utilize his strengths on judgment day.

“I would like to hit people and I can take hits too. I’m going to Guam to do my thing and it’s up to Martinez to stop me,” he said.

According to Sherdog.com, Martinez holds a MMA record of five wins and three losses. However, two of those losses occurred in just over the past year. In late December 2009, Martinez went three five-minute rounds in Tokyo, but lost by unanimous decision to Yusuke Kawaguchi of Akita, Japan in Deep Cage Impact 2009. Then last April during Deep 47 Impact, Martinez fell into a late second round Achilles-Lock Submission from Japan’s Kazuhisa Tazawa. On the other hand, two of Martinez’s wins

came over Saipan icon Charleston “The Predator” Aiken of the Predator Combat team.

As for Fitial, he jumped in the cage five times for a busy 2009 and fared well with three wins and one very questionable no contest during the Gorilla Warfare 2: Battle Ready, where many spectators in attendance thought he defeated USA’s Ed Carpenter in late March of that year.

In any rate, after taking about a 10-month break from MMA competition, last September Fitial exploded back on the scene in Tokyo, Japan with a climactic first round technical knockout win in the Legend Fighting Championships 3’s main event finale bout.

Sherdog claims Fitial holds a MMA card of 11 wins and six losses, one draw and the no contest, but more significantly, Fitial has sparked up a nice streak of four wins in a row since July 2009.

In Trench Warz 10: Collision, Fitial knocked out Guam’s Manny “The Enforcer” Chong in the final moments of the first round in front of a hometown Saipan crowd. Then a couple of months later, “The Big Hit” had another knockout win over Toby Mesa in PXC 18: Dead Game 2. Fitial finished 2009 with a late November bout in Gorilla Warfare 3: Confrontation, where it took him only 13 seconds to lock in a Guillotine submission on the CNMI’s Mike Davis.

Notably, during his break from the cage, Fitial also won a gold medal in Trench Tech’s Art of War 5: No-Gi Grappling and Submission Challenge in June 2010.

MISTER

From Page 28

Gechig and Melissa Halaby in the second round where the game point was set at 15 with a cap of 21.

Next on the hit list were last year’s champions, Randy Steele and Heather Kennedy. Matson and Mister won over the erstwhile champions to advance to the winner’s bracket semifinals against Quincy Johnson and Melody’s sister, Amanda.

Mister and Melody Matson won that semifinal match, 21-15, and then waited for the winner in the loser’s bracket. Both semifinal matches and the final game were all played to a game point of 21 with no set cap.

Fittingly, it was Steele and Kennedy who ultimately arose from the ashes to keep their title defense bid alive.

The pair went through

Russ Quinn and Mili Saiki, 15-13, and then knocked out Gabriel White and Laurie Peterka, 21-11, in the loser’s bracket semifinal.

Last year’s champs had a good run, but Mister and Matson were on fire all day. Both Mister and Steele stand over six feet tall and had no trouble spiking it from behind the 10-foot line, but Mister had a little more mustard on his strikes and strategically placed his shots to split the defense. Steele and Kennedy did everything they could to force a Game 2, but came up a little short.

The 2010 champions took an early 3-1 lead in the finals, but Mister and Matson tied it at 4-all, and went on to stretch out a 12-4 margin. Ahead, 18-10, the game looked like a blowout, but the eventual 2011 champs got stuck on 18, while Steele and Kennedy scored a string of six points and briefly tied the

gles to a 39-31 advantage, going into the final quarter. The Eagles had their biggest lead at 10, 39-29, after Brandon Chargualaf made an undergoal stab off Salas’ feed.

In the fourth and final quarter, Mt. Carmel tried to regain its lost ground, but failed, as GCA kept the pressure on, playing tough defense and going for high-percentage shots.

A well-rested Jeon came back in the fourth canto and after being held to a field goal in the third, the GCA forward scored seven markers in the final frame.

Jeon paced the Eagles with 23 points, while Salas and Hong chipped in eight and

three other qualifiers played one game to determine the former’s foe in the finals.

Villavicencio then survived the playoff, knocking down 179 pins against Cal’s 158 and Sablan’s 141.

In the finals, Villavicencio must beat Omechelang twice to steal the championship, however

EAGLES

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back into the game behind the heroics of Dae Min Jeon. Jeon fired 14 of the team’s 18 points in the second canto to slice the Knights’ lead to only three at the break, 20-23.

A quick 5-2 run at the start of the second half allowed the Eagles to tie the game and they finally pulled ahead after launching another rally, 14-4, in the last five minutes of the third period.

Angelo Salas led GCA’s second rally, canning six points in a row, while Moon Bin Hong contributed five, lifting the Ea-

OMECHELANG

From Page 28

Sablan and Villavicencio tied for the third and last spot for the stepladder finals after posting 1,256 pinfalls each. In the stepladder finals, Omechelang was given a bye, while the

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES	
NBA STANDINGS	
EASTERN CONFERENCE	
Atlantic Division	
	W L Pct GB
Boston	28 8 .778 —
New York	21 14 .600 6 1/2
Philadelphia	15 22 .405 13 1/2
Toronto	12 24 .333 16
New Jersey	10 27 .270 18 1/2
Southeast Division	
	W L Pct GB
Miami	29 9 .763 —
Orlando	25 12 .676 3 1/2
Atlanta	25 14 .641 4 1/2
Charlotte	13 21 .382 14
Washington	9 26 .257 18 1/2
Central Division	
	W L Pct GB
Chicago	24 12 .667 —
Indiana	14 20 .412 9
Milwaukee	14 21 .400 9 1/2
Detroit	12 24 .333 12
Cleveland	8 28 .222 16
WESTERN CONFERENCE	
Southwest Division	
	W L Pct GB
San Antonio	30 6 .833 —
Dallas	26 10 .722 4
New Orleans	21 16 .568 9 1/2
Memphis	17 20 .459 13 1/2
Houston	16 21 .432 14 1/2
Northwest Division	
	W L Pct GB
Oklahoma City	25 13 .658 —
Utah	25 13 .658 —
Denver	20 15 .571 3 1/2
Portland	20 17 .541 4 1/2
Minnesota	9 28 .243 15 1/2
Pacific Division	
	W L Pct GB
L.A. Lakers	26 11 .703 —
Golden State	15 21 .417 10 1/2
Phoenix	14 20 .412 10 1/2
L.A. Clippers	11 24 .314 14
Sacramento	8 25 .242 16
Yesterday's Games	
Atlanta 108, Indiana 93	
Charlotte 104, Washington 89	
Milwaukee 115, New Jersey 92	
Detroit 112, Philadelphia 109, OT	
Chicago 90, Boston 79	
Oklahoma City 109, Memphis 100	
Orlando 117, Dallas 107	
Utah 103, Houston 99, OT	
TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS SCORES	
KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) — Scores Thursday from the Tournament of Champions, a \$5.6 million U.S. PGA event played at the 7,411-yard, par-73 Plantation Course at the Kapalua Resort.	
THIRD ROUND	
Steve Stricker	69-67-65—201
Jonathan Byrd	66-68-67—201
Robert Garrigus	69-63-69—201
Carl Pettersson	66-67-71—204
Matt Kuchar	69-70-66—205
Graeme McDowell	71-68-68—207
Bill Haas	68-70-69—207
Jason Day	73-66-69—208
Bill Lunde	70-68-70—208
Ian Poulter	70-68-70—208
Jim Furyk	68-68-72—208
Arjun Atwal	72-69-68—209
Charley Hoffman	68-75-67—210
Ryan Palmer	70-72-68—210
Adam Scott	73-67-70—210
Dustin Johnson	71-66-73—210
Francesco Molinari	69-67-74—210
Ernie Els	72-64-74—210
Justin Rose	75-67-69—211
Ben Crane	67-70-74—211
Zach Johnson	71-73-69—213
Cameron Beckman	72-71-70—213
Matt Bettencourt	73-70-70—213
Tim Clark	72-68-73—213
Bubba Watson	70-70-73—213
Anthony Kim	69-71-74—214
Heath Slocum	70-74-72—216
Jason Bohn	72-72-72—216
Stuart Appleby	69-75-73—217
Hunter Mahan	70-70-78—218
Rocco Mediate	79-70-75—224
Derek Lamely	72-76-78—226
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS	

Weekend Sports

High school basketball starts

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

The Marianas Inter-scholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League kicked off the action in 2011 with Marianas High School and Saipan Southern High School playing in the opening day of the season.

The Dolphins went on to sweep the Manta Rays in the varsity and junior varsity division games. MHS won the junior varsity match, 35-33, off Michael Mancao's game-winning layup, while the Dolphins topped the Rays in the varsity game, 74-69.

The Dolphins victories were all come-from-behind, as MHS

trailed by as much as nine in the junior varsity game before Mancao escaped past Southern defenders and made a layup in the dying seconds of the match. In the varsity division, MHS was behind after the third period, 50-57, when it held Southern to three field goals in the fourth canto to steal the win.

Also playing in the opening

week of the MISO caging was the Grace Christian Academy, which downed Mt. Carmel School, 55-44.

Still in basketball, the UBA caging announced last week the games in the league's kick-off day on Jan. 17 with corporate rivals IP&E and Mobil playing in the fourth and last game of the night at the Gil-

bert C. Ada Gymnasium.

While waiting for the start of the UBA caging, masters players took the opportunity to shine on the court with the resumption of the Masters Memorial Cup.

In tennis, CNMI junior netter Thea Minor made the Commonwealth proud after winning the U18 doubles event in the 2011 Goulburn Valley Junior

Championships in Australia.

Minor also competed in the U16 singles event of the tournament played in Shepparton, Victoria and after losing in the Round of 16, she topped the consolation draw, winning four straight matches.

Also winning awards last week were bowlers Simon Manacop and Gigi Zapanta, who

were named NMASA December Athletes of the Month.

Manacop and Zapanta earned NMASA's nods after winning the Saipan Bowling Association monthly roll-offs.

The two bowlers were recognized during last Thursday NMASA monthly meeting where NMASA president Michael White also announced that the government is backing the CNMI's bid for the 2017 Pacific Mini Games.

White said Gov. Benigno R. Fitial will be forming a pre-bid committee to gauge the Commonwealth's ability to host the quadrennial event.



Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, center front row, seen here together with dignitaries and special guests during the opening of the 7th Micronesian Games in Palau in August 2010, will be forming a pre-bid committee for the 2017 Pacific Mini Games.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Thea Minor won the U18 doubles event in the 2011 Goulburn Valley Junior Championships in Australia.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Southern's Donald Hockett (17) grabs the rebound during their game against MHS in the MISO caging last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Southern's Tristan Ecalnea goes up for a floater against MHS' Ezra Caro during their game in the MISO caging last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Diamond Auto Fixers' Tim Wesley saves the ball from the baseline during the inaugural season of the UBA caging, which will kick off its second season on Jan. 17 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Gigi Zapanta, seen here flanked by runners-up Yho Villavicencio, right, and Ron Cal, won the NMASA Female Athlete of the Month for December.



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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Mister, Matson rule grass v'ball tourney



WALTER SUTHERLAND

The champions in the 4th Annual Reverse Co-ed Grass Volleyball Tournament, Melody Matson, second left, and Tyce Mister, third left, pose with the runners-up after the event last Saturday at the Navy Hill Field.

By WALTER SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Tyce Mister and Melody Matson topped the Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association's 4th Annual Reverse Co-ed Grass Volleyball Tournament, prevailing over 15 other squads last Saturday at the Navy Hill Field.

The duo went undefeated in five games to win the double-elimination tournament and each took home a first place

prize package of a \$50 BSEA parasailing gift certificate, Gold's Gym Super-10 Pass, \$25 online gift certificate from

PlasticClothing.com, \$20 Shell Fuel Card, \$10 IT&E pre-paid wireless card and an IT&E beach chair. Notably, Matson



was a runner-up finisher in last year's event, while her teammate improved from fifth place in 2010 to first this year.

The winning duo went through Mark Epley and Samantha Babauta in the first round, which was played to 11 with a cap of 15. Then the champs knocked down J.R.

See MISTER on Page 26

Fitial aims for heavyweight title in PXC

By WALTER SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Kelvin "The Big Hit" Fitial will be gunning for a heavyweight title when he competes in perhaps the biggest fight of his MMA career—the Pacific Xtreme Combat 22: Battle For The Belt—on January 21 at the University of Guam Fieldhouse.

"I'm feeling really good and have been training hard everyday. I have been working on my cardio and trying to get both my body and mind in the best

See FITAL on Page 26



Fitial

Eagles soar to first win in MISO league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Grace Christian Academy won its first game of the season after downing Mt. Carmel School, 55-44, during their varsity game in the 2010-2011 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The Eagles took off slowly, making only two points in the opening quarter, but regrouped and bounced back in

the second half for an 11-point winning margin.

Playing sans head coach Ed Salas, GCA struggled offensively at the beginning of the match with only Patrick Reyes scoring for the Eagles.

In contrast, the Knights got off to a good start, drawing six straight points from Reynald Cabal-tica for a 10-2 lead.

Then in the second quarter, GCA assistant coach Genesis Prieto's wards saw daylight, as they slowly worked their way

See EAGLES on Page 26



Omechelang is 2010 Queen of the Lanes

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Gloria Omechelang now has a trophy to match her husband's.

Omechelang topped the season-ending 2010 Saipan Bowling Association-Budweiser Queen of the Lanes Tournament, besting 11 other participants yesterday at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose.

The win was a significant im-

provement for the female kegger, as she finished nowhere in the Top 10 during the 2009 season-ending roll-off won by Ron Cal. With the victory, Omechelang is scheduled to take home a championship trophy, which her husband, Percy, won in 2009 during the King of the Lanes Tournament.

"I dedicate this win to my husband. I hope he wins too next week to defend his title," Omechelang said.

Omechelang secured the 2010 tiara after beating Yvo Villavicencio in Game 1 of the finals, 170-134. Omechelang drew the automatic first championship berth in the stepladder finals after topping the eight-game qualifying roll-off in the afternoon.

The eventual 2010 Queen of

the Lanes had a total of 1,349 in eight games for an average of 168.63 pinfalls per game. Omechelang downed more than 200 pinfalls in Games 4 (204) and 7 (254) for a 58-pinfal lead against her closest pursuer. She started with 122 pinfalls in Game 2, followed by 168 and 145 in the next two games. In Game 5 and 6, Omechelang had 157 and 145 pinfalls and then finished with 154 in Game 8.

Dethroned champion Rosalinda Cal placed second with 1,291 pinfalls, showing her best form in Game 2 with her 188 pinfalls. Cal, who averaged 161.38 pinfalls in the qualifying tournament, advanced to the stepladder finals, joining Omechelang, Tess Sablan and Villavicencio.

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◀ Gloria Omechelang poses for a photo after ruling the season-ending 2010 Saipan Bowling Association-Budweiser Queen of the Lanes Tournament yesterday at the Saipan Bowling Center in San Jose.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Grace Christian Academy's Angelo Salas drives against three Mt. Carmel School defenders during their game in the MISO caging last Friday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.